

## The Forsaken Waterpot John 4:28-30

In the 4th chapter of John's Gospel is a **fascinating story** of an encounter that took place between Jesus & a Samaritan woman who had come to draw water at Jacob's well. You are familiar with the details of the story, so I will not take the time to read it all (but I encourage you to do so!) The climax of that story is found in **John 4: 28 - 30**. *"The woman then left her waterpot, & went her way into the city, & saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, & came unto him."*

Notice the words **"The woman then left her waterpot ..."** **That waterpot**, left behind by this Samaritan woman, **is a symbol of a transformed life!**

The **conversation** that had taken place between this woman & Jesus was a **most remarkable exchange** indeed! Jesus had spoken to **her deepest need**. Jesus had **exposed her sin-filled soul**. Jesus had **clearly read her wretchedness & her spiritual misery**. Jesus knew it was only as this woman acknowledged her sinfulness that **God could grant her forgiveness & peace**.

This woman at the well became so excited in her discovery of the Christ that she laid aside her empty waterpot, & hastened back into the village. She put down her waterpot in a hurry & went to her own people & said: **"Come see a man who told me everything I ever did! Is not this the Christ (the Messiah)?"** She **left her waterpot** in the excitement of her **discovery**. Her new found joy made her forget the original purpose of her visit to the well that day! She had discovered the **"living water"** & she no longer needed the waterpot! That **waterpot**, left behind by this Samaritan woman, **is truly a symbol of a transformed life!** Let's consider just how symbolic it is!

### 1. She left a BURDEN OF SIN for a NEW MORAL START IN CHRIST!

Every previous day, until this day, the Samaritan woman left the well with a **burden** upon her **shoulder, the waterpot**. But she also carried an **even greater burden** upon her **soul, the burden of a life time of sin**. But on this wonderful day, for **the first time**, she left without a burden upon her shoulder, **& without a burden upon her soul**. She left her burden of **sin** where she left the **waterpot, at the feet of Jesus!** The feet of Jesus is the **only** place where the load & guilt, which results from a sinful life, can be severed from the soul.

No longer would she make a hobby of collecting husbands & lovers; no more would she be considered a woman of the street; she had become a **new person** through & through. Had the gospel song been written, she could have sung: *"What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought Since Jesus came into my heart."* Her **life** had been changed; her **actions** had changed; her **habits** had been changed; her **values** had been changed.

Jesus gave her a new heart; old things were passed away. She was now a new creation; a new person altogether! Jesus **removed** from her the **feeling of human shame**. She was no longer an outcast; no longer a byword. For this Samaritan woman, a new life had begun. **She had left a burden of sin for a new moral start in Christ! To be truly saved is to be changed;** changed inwardly; changed morally; changed in our purposes & our desires!

*Time* magazine back in the early '70s described Chuck Colson as "tough, wily, nasty & ... (extremely) loyal to Richard Nixon." At age 40, Chuck Colson had become one of the President's closet confidants. **Then came** the December 1973 headline: **"Colson makes decision for Christ."** The story jarred Washington; many suspected a gimmick. There was unbelieving laughter, & bewilderment. Was this the White House "hatchet man" & ex-Marine Captain? The same man who supposedly **boasted** that he would run over his own grandmother to re-elect the

President?

Then came the book, entitled ***Born Again***, in which Chuck Colson takes us behind the scenes to the smashing Nixon victory of 1972. He described **the deadness of spirit** which **settled over him** at what should have been his moment of greatest triumph! He told about the conversation he had with a dynamic Boston business man **which led to his spiritual rebirth!** And he told the story of one man's unrelenting search for meaning, which gave him the **courage** to plead 'guilty' & serve long months in a federal prison, **all because he had discovered a whole new meaning of life in the person of Jesus Christ!**

The question that has perplexed people through the ages is: ***Can a man's heart be changed?*** The question cries for an answer even today, as a sickness of spirit sweeps the world & individuals search desperately for meaning in their lives. My friends, for all of you who are struggling with an inner emptiness in this computer-controlled, coldly impersonal society, there **is** good news. **Jesus Christ can still provide the way to a whole new life & new hope!**

The Samaritan woman found it to be true in her day! Chuck Colson found it to be true in his life. You & I can experience it to be true in our day! Many a woman, & many a man, have left their waterpot of sinful-ness at the feet of Jesus, **for a new moral start in Christ!**

## **2. She left a BITTER SPIRIT for a FORGIVING SPIRIT!**

According to custom, the women of the town normally came to the well at 9:00 in the morning, & at 6:00 in the evening. These women would cluster together & visit & laugh & gossip. But **this woman** had been so shunned by the others that she came **at noon** to avoid contact with other women. At no other time of the day would **just one waterpot** be found at the well. **That solitary, forgotten waterpot speaks forcibly of a lonely embittered life.** Bitter against the people who had shunned her. Bitter against the men who had betrayed her. Bitter against the God of her childhood, who to her had appeared **only to be a spectator** of life's battles & burdens.

Then she met the Master who talked with her as no one else had ever done. He treated her with respect; He spoke to her heart's need. And when she left that waterpot behind, **she also left behind her bitter spirit. She left her bitter spirit for a forgiving spirit!** The fact that she now **loved** the people of the village, is seen in the fact that she witnessed to them. She forgave them; she loved them; & she told them about her Jesus.

A strange evangelist she was indeed, but she was an impressive one! **Her forgiveness & her witness was personal & effective!** In fact, she became a **soul winner**, for we are told that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified..." (vr 39). She did not say, "**Go** see a man..." Rather, "**Come** see a man." She **brought** the town people to see & to hear Jesus for themselves, **& many more believed on Jesus!**

**A bitter spirit is never a witnessing spirit! An unforgiving spirit is never a witnessing spirit! Leave that bitter spirit behind!** Learn by the grace of God to **forgive!** If you are negative & complaining & unforgiving & bitter, **you have no real witness!** People do not come to know Christ through your bitter spirit. People are not attracted to Christ by a negative complaining tongue, nor attitude. **Your bitter spirit will never make others thirsty for the Water of Life.**

As a young boy of the age of 7, Randall Mark woke up one day in a hospital, badly burned over 2/3rds of his body. His mother & father were responsible for setting a fire that claimed the lives of his three younger brothers. Randall & his older sister were the only survivors of the blaze. Severely burned & scarred for life, Randall was placed in an orphanage & then adopted by Christian parents. They truly loved him, but the awful hatred he felt toward his biological mother & father, kept him from ever loving his new parents in return. When he came of age,

he joined the Army; & then one Sunday morning at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, he knelt at an altar along with other young soldiers eager to experience God's grace.

That morning Randall quietly prayed: "O God, please forgive me **so that I can forgive them.**" And God did forgive Pvt. Randall Mark, & in so doing, enabled him to forgive his biological parents, & to begin trusting & loving his adopted parents! People began to watch as God transformed a bitter young soldier into a new creature in Christ! Like the woman at the well, Randall Mark had left behind his bitter spirit for a forgiving & witnessing spirit!

### 3. She left a **TRADITIONAL RELIGION** for a **PERSONAL SAVIOR!**

The Samaritans had their own form of religious practice. The woman at the well was ready to argue at the drop of the hat. She was ready to defend her traditional religious beliefs! She argued: "You Jews say; -- we say; -- what do you say?"

But Jesus ignored her traditional religious arguments, & focused on her need of a **personal Savior!** He knew the issues of her heart, & He knew that her **traditional religious practices did not satisfy the deep longings of her heart.** Jesus knew that this Samaritan woman was **hungry for a living faith,** which a **traditional religion** could never satisfy. Until that day her religion was summed up in the words, "**Come see a Mountain.**" But transformed in Christ, she now cries out: "**Come see a Man!**" **Now she had a genuine, vital, heartfelt experience, & a relationship with the Jesus Christ, her Lord & Savior!**

**We too can be guilty of clinging to our traditional religious practices, without possessing the real presence of Jesus! Catechism in itself will not satisfy; Confirmation will not satisfy; Baptism will not satisfy; Church membership will not satisfy; Church ritual & form will not satisfy.** You must experience the living Presence of Jesus Christ in your heart to be fully satisfied! Nothing less, no matter how traditional it may be, will do! You can attend Sunday School every week; worship in the church service; sing the traditional hymns; & even sing faithfully in the choir. You may even pay your tithe & give to special offerings. You may be able to quote the 23rd Psalm & say the Lord's prayer. **But if you do not know Jesus as your personal Savior, you are lost & without God! & unsatisfied!**

You may have been a **Methodist** all your life; or a **Catholic;** or a **Presbyterian;** or a **Nazarene;** or an Independent **Baptist.** But my friend, no matter what label is on the **outside,** if you do not have **Jesus** on the **inside,** you have nothing that will satisfy! You are still empty & without hope! "**My church**" must never be a substitute for "**My Savior!**" **If you do not know Jesus in a real & vital relationship, your traditional religious practice will never satisfy!**

Donald Hodel served as Interior Secretary in the Ronald Reagan administration. At a prayer breakfast during the 1988 Republican National Convention, he & his wife Barbara told how the tragic heart wrenching suicide of their 17-year-old son, led them to trade their **traditional "cultural Christianity"** for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. At that prayer breakfast, Don Hodel, who from May 2003 until March 2005, served as President & CEO of Focus on the Family, said to those in attendance: "If you have never asked Christ into your life, I'd like to close with an opportunity for you to pray & do so." **Don & Barbara Hodel, like the woman at the well, left their waterpot of empty religious practice at the feet of Jesus, & in its place they found a personal Savior!**

**CONCLUSION:** She left her waterpot; She no longer needed it, for now she had within her an **inexhaustible well of living Water!** No doubt this very morning there is **someone here** whose soul is parched & thirsty, trying to find satisfaction in things of this world. **But what you really need is a taste of the refreshing Water of Life!**

The song writer described it so beautifully:  
*Like the woman at the well, -- I was seeking For things that could not satisfy.  
And then I heard the Savior speaking: "Draw from My well that never shall run dry."*

**Come to Jesus today & leave your empty waterpot behind.** Leave your burden of sin at the feet of Jesus. Let every negative & bitter spirit be cleansed away. Leave behind the formality of traditional religious practices, in exchange for **a life truly transformed by Jesus Christ!**

*At the feet of Jesus  
Let thy burden fall,  
While He gently whispers,  
"I'll bear it all."*

Rev. Lyle W. Pettit -- Calvary Baptist Church -- Benson, AZ  
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