

*“Living Water”*

June 16, 2013

Text: John 4:11-15

**Gen 25:8 makes a wonderful statement about Abraham that**

**I’m sure we would all someday like to claim for our own epitaph:**

*“Abraham breathed his last & died in a ripe old age, an old man, & satisfied with life.”*

I wonder how many people can ever say “I’m satisfied with life.”

Most die unsatisfied because they have spent their lives looking in all the wrong places for satisfaction.

That’s because they don’t understand, as Abraham did, that the things of this world do-not/cannot satisfy the soul.

They may seem to, for awhile, but in a short amount of time the old unsatisfied cravings will always return.

Only the gospel of regeneration/eternal-life by God’s grace through faith in Jesus X, has the power w/i it to satisfy the soul permanently.

The human spirit thirsts for something more—something greater, grander, & more eternal than anything this world can offer.

In the words of Solomon=> *“He [God] has also set eternity in their heart”* (Eccl 3:11).

Because man has eternity in his heart, the things of time—the things of this world—can never fully satisfy his eternal soul.

Fame/riches/pleasure can't satisfy, winning the lottery can't do it; the achievement of life goals can't ultimately do it; living exactly the lifestyle we choose can't do it. Vacations at resorts or places of amusement such as Disneyland (which sells itself as happiest place on earth) can't do it, nor can friends/family.

These can all be good things & can create some precious memories, but ultimately, they cannot truly or permanently satisfy the soul.

Even a good marriage cannot do it—it can help, but ultimately it cannot fully satisfy our souls.

God has placed w/i every man/woman a spiritual thirst which only He Himself can really satisfy.

The good news is, that He is willing to do so.

The bad news is that man doesn't ask Him to, because from birth he seeks his own independence from God.

We are like God's chosen people Israel, about whom He said through Jeremiah (2:13)=> *"My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of **living waters**, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns That can hold no water."*

Man's soul thirsts for the water of life, & God is the fountain of living waters, having an endless supply.

Psa 36 says of-Him/to-Him=> *"For with You is the fountain of life" (36:9).*

God is the endless Source of life, in its full  
abundance.

But man says, “No thanks I’ll build my own cisterns,  
collect my own water, & satisfy myself w/ the things  
of this world.”

Unfortunately, his broken cisterns hold no water,  
so he spends his entire life thirsting spiritually,  
his soul never really feeling satisfied.

Occasionally, an individual, prompted by the H.S., discovers that  
God’s fountain of living waters is found in His Son Jesus X.  
Today’s text tells of such a person—the woman at the well.  
This woman at the well in Sychar learned that Jesus was  
the *Giver* of living water, learned about the *goodness*  
of that water, & then sought it from Him as a *gift*.

And that constitutes the outline of this text=>

- \* The Giver of Living Water
- \* The Goodness of Living Water
- \* The Gift of Living Water.

**\* The Giver of Living Water**

**As we have seen over the past few weeks, Jesus & His little  
band of disciples had come to Sychar in Samaria.**

He was exhausted from having just spent several hours walking  
from Judea and teaching His disciples all morning long as  
He walked.

By the time He reached the well at Sychar, it was noon and  
He was tired/thirsty, so He sat down at the well.

His disciples went on into the city to buy groceries, leaving Him alone.

Then a woman from the city approached, & He struck up a conversation w/ her, asking her for a drink of water.

She said that His doing so surprised her, because normally, Jewish men never spoke a word to Samaritan women.

Jesus responded by telling her=> *“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you **living water**”* (Jn 4:10).

This is the statement to which the woman is responding as we begin this morning’s text=>

**[John 4:11]**=> *“She said to Him, ‘Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?’”*

There’s doubt in her voice, if not skepticism, or possibly even sarcasm.

**Obviously the woman thinks of “living water” as literal water.**

Maybe in her mind it’s water of great quality/quantity, but it’s literal water nonetheless.

As we saw last time, living water is actually eternal life, which includes all the blessings of salvation such as spiritual sustenance & the joy/security of fellowship/communion w/ God.

Isaiah talks about that in Isa 12=> *“Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has*

*become my salvation.’ / Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation ” (12:2-3).*

Living water also involves forgiveness of sin, cleansing from sin, and a personal righteousness that prevents a believer from continually/perpetually adding to his guilt w/ unrestrained sinfulness.

E.g. in Isa 1, God says=> “**Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, / Learn to do good”** (1:16-17).

The water of life is the agent of such washing/cleansing.

Although we are to actively wash ourselves in this sense,

Ezek 36 says God is the One who supplies the water & actually cleanses us.

There God says=> “*I will sprinkle **clean water** on you, and you will be clean; I will **cleanse** you from all your filthiness and from all your idols” (36:25).*

Living water also represents the full/joyous satisfaction of all the spiritual desires/yearnings of our souls.

Isa 55=> “*Ho! Every one who **thirsts**, come to the **waters**; & you who have no money come, buy & eat. Come, buy wine & milk Without money & w/o cost” (55:1).*

Verse 2 adds=> “**delight** yourself in abundance.”

**The Samaritan woman prob. wasn’t aware of any of this.**

Samaritans had a truncated Bible that included only the first five books of the OT.

So this woman was prob. ignorant of all these wonderful truths in the writings of Isaiah/Ezekiel.

In addition, her mind couldn't get past the literal meaning of the term "*living water.*"

That's why she said Jesus had no way of drawing the water, out of Jacob's well.

As she saw it, He couldn't have provided her with water of any kind—living/otherwise.

Not only would He need a bucket of some kind, He'd need a long rope, because, as she said, "*the well is deep*" (it was about 100 feet deep).

**I believe this text is a strong argument for God's sovereign election of certain people to salvation.**

Compare this woman at the well, e.g., w/ Nicodemus.

He came to Jesus by night looking for an answer to the question of how one enters into the Kingdom of God.

So one can understand why he eventually believed and became born-again.

He was thinking in spiritual terms to begin with.

This woman, by contrast, came to the well looking for nothing but water—physical water—apparently indifferent to spiritual issues, and yet X saved her.

Jesus graciously instructed her on the living water of salvation/eternal-life in terms she could understand/relate-to.

But even then it took her quite a while to even begin  
perceiving “*living water*” as something spiritual,  
having to do with salvation.

**The real sticking point for this woman was Jesus Himself.**

She viewed Him as an ordinary man, who was tired/thirsty/weak  
and could hardly have been of any help to her.

Not to mention the fact that He had no observable way of  
getting the water out of that well.

In pointing out to Jesus all these improbabilities, she compared  
Him with the patriarch Jacob, who had dug this very well  
almost 2000 years earlier.

[Verse 12] (woman)=> “*You are not greater than our father  
Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it  
himself and his sons and his cattle?*”

This well had produced an abundance of water!

**Clearly, this woman believed Jesus was not greater than  
Jacob—and that was her most significant error.**

Until she recognized Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God,  
& had personally placed her faith in Him, there was  
no way for her to receive the living water of  
salvation/eternal-life.

She needed to discover 2 truths for herself=>

\* Jesus was infinitely greater than Jacob because He was  
God incarnate, come to earth to save people’s souls.

\* The living water Jesus offered was infinitely greater than literal water, because it sustains/refreshes the soul for all eternity, not just the body here/now for a time.

**What Jesus was teaching the woman at the well is a principle every man/woman must understand=> He alone is the Giver of living water, & all its eternal spiritual blessings.**

*“There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).*

We cannot have the water of life w/o the Giver of the water.

We cannot obtain it through religious ceremony, or living by certain rules/standards, or even learning certain doctrines.

It is only acquired by forming a living/intimate/personal relationship with the living God-man, Jesus X.

It is only attained through spiritual union w/ Him.

Jesus put it as boldly/clearly as possible in John 6=>

Vs 54=> *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.”*

Vs 56=> *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”*

This is the spiritual union w/ Jesus that brings God’s living waters streaming into our lives.

We must receive Jesus into our innermost soul until we trust Him, depend on Him, love Him, follow Him, & yield to Him.

Until His life becomes our lives, and our lives become His.

Until we can say w/ the Apostle Paul=> *“The life which I*

*now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”*  
(Gal 2:20).

Our only hope of true forgiveness of sin is found in our believing into such a personal relationship w/ Jesus X.

Eph 1=> *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us”* (1:7-8).

Any religion that is neat/clean/philosophical is absolutely worthless.

Though it may seem to quench one’s spiritual thirst for a few minutes on Sunday mornings, it will leave him dying of thirst throughout the rest of his life.

Only that religion stained/smeared w/ blood from the wounds in Jesus’ hands/feet/head/side can redeem a lost soul.

He—and He alone—is the Giver, of the water, of life, and He gives it to us on the basis of His atoning death.

**\* The Goodness of Living Water**

**Now Jesus plunges into an explanation of “living water” itself, to bring the woman beyond her simplistic thoughts about it, as merely literal water.**

As He does so, she/we discover its goodness as a gift from God.

[Verses 13-14a]=> *“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; / but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst;’”*

**Although Jesus doesn't directly answer her question about whether/not He is greater than Jacob, He shows that His water does what Jacob's can't=> eliminate thirst.**

It's not that living water ban's spiritual thirst altogether.

Rather, it so satisfies the soul by pouring out the H.S. on believers, that no sense of emptiness is left w/i them.

Never again will they thirst for salvation/eternal-life, because they will have it w/i them forever.

Never again will they walk alone, facing the potential deadliness of spiritual thirst w/o God's provision.

Never again will their souls experience holy desires for that which they do-not/cannot have.

The Source of that life is the Spirit Himself who, unlike the water in Jacob's well, is limitless/never-ending.

Once the H.S. has indwelt a believer, He will never leave him, but will go on eternally supplying him w/ life.

The words translated "*shall never thirst*" in our text, are literally "shall *never* [emphasized] thirst into eternity."

The clear implication of Jesus' words is that a believer will never lose his salvation, & the H.S. will never stop meeting his soul's needs, nor be taken from him—ever.

How long will the believer have eternal life?

As long as the fountain of living water flows w/i him.

How long will that be? Eternally.

This doesn't mean that believers will never have holy longings for greater closeness to their Lord.

It means that the Spirit will always be present in their lives to give them those longings, & then to fully satisfy them.

And whoever drinks of the living water of the Spirit which X gives to His people, will forever have His cleansing, purifying, soul-refreshing influence, at work w/i him.

**It's not that eternal life simply endures, or that the believer simply never loses his salvation; it's that his salvation flourishes, is continually replenished, and overflows w/i him.**

[Verse 14b] (Jesus)=> *"but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."*

Jesus says the living water w/i a believer is *"springing up,"* lit. "leaping up" in an endless outburst of life, from the Creator/Source of all life.

In Jn 7:38, Jesus quotes the OT to describe all this even more eloquently=> *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"*

**Please notice a few characteristics of this fountain of eternal life placed within the believer, that makes it so good=>**

1<sup>st</sup>, Jesus says it "will become *in* him."

It's not *with* him, or *near* him, or *around* him—but *in* him,  
so he can't lose it anymore than he could lose a vital  
organ.

It is *in* him, & has become part of him.

We have it, not merely in our body/mind, but as part of our  
renewed nature.

If it were just part of our religion (e.g. a rite/precept/object),  
someone might take it from us.

But it's a vital life-principle that has become interwoven w/  
our renewed being, & will be ours forever even in  
eternity.

2<sup>nd</sup>, living water is an energized force, full of freshness/life.

It's not like a cistern, where water just collects & grows  
stagnant.

It has an energy of its own, continually stimulating the soul  
to rise-up/rejoice-in its Creator, like bubbles rising up  
in a fountain.

This is the opposite of a repetitive religious routine that  
grows stale/wearisome.

It is the spirit of man reaching upward toward his Creator,  
worshiping/rejoicing in spirit/truth, w/ God-given life,  
created w/i him for that very purpose.

3<sup>rd</sup>, living water w/i the Xn is not affected by his surroundings.

Jacob's well still yields water today, after almost 4000  
years.

The believer has a divine supply of life w/i himself that will last forever and survive even spiritual droughts in this world.

In both cases, their secret sources are too deep/abundant to be gravely affected by any outside circumstances.

Those whose religion is superficial, like a shallow well, can be dried up spiritually by corrupt/godless culture, or by the blistering heat of opposition/persecution.

But for the true believer, whose inward well springs up to eternal life, opposition simply causes him to look ever deeper to his Source—his all-sufficient Savior—discovering Him once again to be eternal/infinite/faithful.

His faith is not diverted by wealth, or subverted by poverty, and his spirit continues to bubble up in prayer/praise, in hope/joy/love for his God, as he senses the H.S. continually accomplishing His will/work w/i him.

4<sup>th</sup>, the living water w/i us springs up to eternal life.

This is the life we received at the moment of our regeneration, but it is a life which, by God's grace, will blossom into perfection/glory, in eternity.

This is the life of X w/i us, who said, "*Because I live, you will live also*" (Jn 14:19).

In eternity every hindrance will be stripped away from it, as it is perfected/glorified.

And so we see the eternal goodness of the living water X gives us.

**\* The Gift of Living Water**

[Verse 15]=> *“The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, **give** me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.’”*

**This woman didn’t yet understand the nature of living water, which is why she was still thinking of it in terms of coming to this well each day to draw it out.**

But one thing she got right, was the concept that, if she was to have it, Jesus would have to give it to her, as a free gift. She doesn’t say to Him, “Tell me the cost of it, so I can determine whether/not I can afford it.”

She says, “**Give** me this water,” using the verb form of the word for a free gift.

In verse 10, Jesus had mentioned “*the gift of God,*” and had told her that, if she had asked Him for it, He would have given her the living water.

So now, in her simple/unaffected/unadorned way, she says=> “*Sir, **give** me this water.*”

The woman has at least progressed to an understanding that the water Jesus offers is a special kind of water, which she calls  
*“this water.”*

She understands too, that, whatever “this water” is, it prevents thirst of some kind, so she desires to have it.

Before she could become born again & receive X’s living water, she needed to understand/accept 2 facts=>

She was a sinner, & Jesus the Messiah is the Savior of sinners like her.

In the next few verses, Jesus will cause her to face her own sinfulness by reminding her, she has had 5 husbands & is now living w/ a man to whom she's not even married.

Then Jesus will reveal to her that He is the Messiah, and thus the Savior of men/women like her, from their sin.

The fact that she doesn't yet fully understand the nature of living water, is far less important than what she does understand=> That Jesus is the Giver of that water.

X wants her faith (& our faith too) to be in Him, and not in the water of eternal life itself, and not in anything/anyone else.

In fact, we don't even put faith in our own faith.

So the woman does the 1 thing every sinner must do to receive the living water of eternal life=> she asks for it.

She acted in faith on the principle Jesus will later state=>

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Matt 7:7).*

The woman was prob. just asking for something good she really couldn't yet have defined, but she had come to believe in the Giver w/ sufficient faith, to trust that whatever He gave her would be a blessing.

And we don't criticize her imperfect understanding of all the theological nuances/realities behind God's living water.

We simply witness w/ gratitude/awe the Spirit's initial step in drawing this human heart toward X; & a soul's initial step to taste/see that the Lord is truly good (Psa 34:8).

The Spirit is just beginning His work of conversion, and it is a marvelous thing to observe His wisdom/power at work, in this woman's heart/life.

**There is no need to peer into the deep mysteries of God in order to receive His life-giving water.**

All we have to know for sure, is the identity of its only Giver.

This priceless drink is freely given to all who ask for it by faith, from our wonderful Redeemer—Jesus X.

He always/only gives it as a gift of His grace, with no need for prior moral reform on our part, and no place for our offering Him something in exchange for it, or w/ which to buy it.

As Isaiah put it, we come w/o money, and w/o cost (55:1).

We don't bring a bucket/rope, or anything else to the transaction—just empty/open hands, and an open heart.

There is no background characteristic that might make us more/less fit to receive this priceless gift of living water.

The woman had the wrong background: She was Samaritan. Nor are there any moral activities or religious ceremonies by which one can make himself more fit/qualified to receive it—this woman was an adulterer many times over, & her religious affiliation was the Samaritan perversion of Judaism.

The only thing we need in order to receive the water of life is a humble willingness to seek the most wonderful possible gift, from the most gracious possible Savior, at no cost, knowing full well that we don't deserve it, & we never will.

It is simply accepting by faith heaven's infinite charity.

Then turning back to the Giver, & loving Him w/ our whole heart/soul/mind/strength (Mk 12:30) for His infinite kindness/graciousness towards us.

## ***“Living Water”***

June 16, 2013

Text: John 4:11-15

1. The human spirit thirsts for something grander and more eternal than anything this [12 world] can offer.

Gen 25:8; Eccl 3:11; Jer 2:13; Psa 36:9

2. **The woman at the well in Sychar learned that Jesus was the *Giver* of living water, learned about the *goodness* of that water, and then sought it from Him as a [10 gift]...**

### **\* The Giver of Living Water**

Jn 4:10

### **[John 4:11]**

3. Living water is eternal life—all the blessings of salvation such as spiritual sustenance and the joy and security of fellowship and [20 communion] with God.

Isa 12:2-3; 1:16-17; Ezek 36:25; Isa 55:1, 2

4. The Samaritan woman probably [14 wasn't] aware of any of this.
5. The real sticking point for this woman was Jesus Himself; she viewed Him as an ordinary man who could hardly have been of any [10 help] to her.

### **[Verse 12]**

6. Jesus was teaching the woman that He alone is the [12 Giver] of living water and all its eternal spiritual blessings.

Acts 4:12; Jn 6:54, 56; Gal 2:20

7. Our only hope of true forgiveness of sin is found in our believing into a [18 personal] relationship with Jesus Christ.

Eph 1:7-8

### **\* The Goodness of Living Water**

### **[Verses 13-14a]**

8. The clear implication of Jesus' words is that a believer will never lose his salvation, and the Holy Spirit will never stop meeting his soul's needs, nor be taken from him—[10 ever].

**[Verse 14b]**

Jn 7:38

**Characteristics of this fountain of eternal life placed within the believer...**

- \*9. Jesus says it “will become [6 in] him.”
- \*10. Living water is an energized force, full of freshness and [10 life].
- \*11. Living water within the Christian is [8 not] affected by his surroundings.
- \*12. The living water within us springs up to [16 eternal] life.

Jn 14:19

**\* The Gift of Living Water**

**[Verse 15]**

13. The fact that she doesn't yet fully understand the nature of living water is far less important than what she does understand: Jesus is the [12 Giver] of that water.

Mt 7:7; Psa 34:8; Isa 55:1

14. The only thing we need in order to receive the water of life is the humble willingness to seek the most wonderful possible gift, from the most gracious possible Savior, at no cost, knowing full well that we don't [16 deserve] it.

Mk 12:30