

# Meeting Jesus

## The Woman at the Well

### Foundation

#### Bible passage : John 4.1-42

In writing his gospel John seems to have chosen just a few of the many remarkable things that happened in Jesus' ministry, which he then describes in detail. What is more he chose events which fit with his purpose of showing how we can have life in Jesus' name (Jn 20.30). Verse 42 is therefore the climax of chapter 4 when the Samaritan villagers declare "Now we believe ... that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." They were interested initially because of what the woman at the well had told them (v28), but became convinced themselves about Jesus being Christ and Saviour. This is still how many become Christians, someone tells them about Jesus, they become interested, and then they come to believe for themselves.

**"Now we believe... this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."**

John also draws attention remarkable fact that Jesus, a Jewish teacher, spoke to this woman of Samaria. The woman herself was surprised (v9) and said so. Many at that time would have frowned at the fact that Jesus had this conversation with an unknown woman when both were alone. But John draws more attention to the fact that she was a Samaritan and "Jews have no dealings with Samaritans". The animosity between them went back centuries. But here, and in other incidents, Jesus showed a disregard for such barriers and when he later told His disciples to be His witnesses He particularly mentioned Samaria (Acts 1.8). Most Jews would



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have believed that the Christ would come to save Israel, but the Samaritans learned that the Christ is the Saviour of the world, and they were saved when they trusted in Him.

The conversation between the woman and Jesus is notable in other ways too. He taught that He gives water that quenches our spiritual thirst for ever. He said that the Samaritans were wrong about the place of worship whilst the Jews were right. (Though elsewhere we see that the Jews had allowed their pride in Jerusalem and the Temple to neglect the heart of faith.) But he also said that something had changed (v23), His coming meant that worship is now not about the place but about worshipping "in Spirit and in truth". If this were not the case then Christians would still be going to Jerusalem year by year for the festivals.

The other remarkable thing, which clearly made the most impact on the woman, is that Jesus knew about her background and her many marriages. Yet this did not stop Him talking to her in order that she might come to believe in Him.



**Jesus showed that He had come that anyone might come to believe in Him, that He is both Christ and Saviour.**