

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of **TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

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## Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What are some ways the world seeks to quench its thirst for soul-satisfaction?

In what ways have you found that Christ fulfills **your** deepest thirsts?

- What aspects **of church life** does the world and media tend to praise?

Why don't they find the church's claim to provide "soul-satisfaction" something to be praised?

- What are the "twin evils" God mentions in Jeremiah 2:13?

Which one do you think is **worse**—and **why**?

- The Samaritan woman engaged in banter with Jesus in order to cover up the drought in her soul. Was there a time in your life when you did the same? Tell us about it.

Why do you think admitting the drought in our souls is so threatening?

What got through to you?

- What do you think contributed to the Samaritan woman's eagerness to respond to Jesus?

At this time, how much do you share her eagerness to "drop defensiveness and respond"—and **why**?

Has there been a time when you were **less** eager? ...**more** eager?

What do you think explains your current level of openness and honesty?

What do you think could increase it?

What role do you think other believers can or should play in increasing your responsiveness to God?

# Sermon Summary

A western journalist mentioned to an Arab oil magnate how fortunate he was that his country had huge reserves of oil. “Fortunate?” he retorted, “What’s so fortunate about having oil? You people have rain.” He’s so right! Rain is much more fortunate than non-replenishable oil under the ground. Water is life. Living here in the United States we don’t appreciate water like many people around the world do—because here it is so plentiful. For many people around the world, water is their most precious and rare resource. Jesus referred to himself as the source of living water, and he is able to make this claim because he alone can quench life’s profoundest thirst. He alone can satisfy our thirsty souls. Jesus said: “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life” (John 5:24).

Many of you come to church because you hope that here your soul’s thirst will be quenched—and your deepest longings for purpose and meaning will find resolution. And to be honest, one of my greatest fears is that you will leave here without finding it—not because it is not to be found here, but because I might fail to convincingly point you to it. We are spiritual beings, but because of sin we find ourselves disconnected from the life of God. As a result, our souls are thirsty for what only God can provide. Life-giving water for our souls is available, but we keep drinking from sources that cannot satisfy (Jeremiah 2:13). We look for life in the wrong places. We look for it in the things that money can buy—houses and cars and jewelry and clothes and gadgets. We look for it through experiences—vacations and plays and concerts and sporting events. We look for it in pleasure. But those things, as pleasant as they are, will never satisfy the human soul.

Today we are going to meet a woman in the Bible whose soul was thirsty. She had spent her life trying to quench her thirst in illegitimate, non-fulfilling ways (John 4: 5-26; 39-42). She met Jesus while he was sitting by a well resting. She assumed that he was as thirsty as she was. Why else would he be hanging out by a well? But the strange thing was, he had no bucket with which to draw water. He asked her for a drink, and after she expressed surprise that he, a Jew, would condescend to talk with her, a Samaritan woman, Jesus replied, “If you knew God’s gift of living water, if you knew who I am, you’d be asking me for a drink.”

She missed Jesus’ point entirely, and continues in her off-handed, semi-flirtatious way, “How are you going to give me water, when you don’t even have a bucket!” But the banter didn’t go on forever. Jesus abruptly ended the chit-chat by saying: “Why don’t you go get your husband and bring him here?” Suddenly the casual chit-chat is over. It’s truth-time. “My husband?” the woman gasps, “I don’t have a husband.” “You are right,” continues Jesus, “you don’t have a husband. You’ve had five husbands, and the guy you are living with now isn’t your husband.” Reeling now, she knows that the game she was enjoying with Jesus has ended.

We too play games with God, don’t we? We can play them for a long time, glorying in our clever evasiveness. And we will continue playing these games until Jesus’ continual probing exposes our game-playing for what it is—a protective cloak designed to preserve our carefully crafted, but ever-fragile, sense of personal autonomy from God. In order to expose our guilt and show us our profound spiritual need Jesus puts any number of questions to us: “Go call your estranged child,” or “Produce your income tax return,” or “Show me the lonely person needing comfort for whom you gave up leisure time,” or “Bring back the person your tongue slew.”

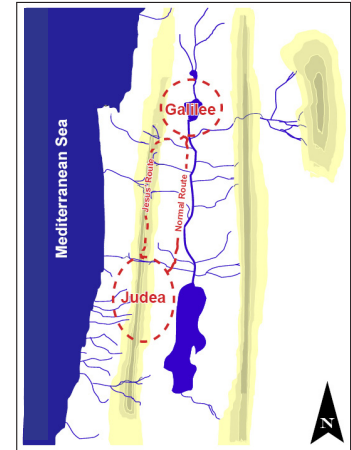
Jesus knows how to get our attention. He knows how to shatter our illusion of self-sufficiency and self-righteousness. Jesus loves us so much that he keeps probing. He keeps chipping away at our resistance. While he doesn’t say, “Go, call your husband” to all of us, he speaks to all of us nonetheless—in ways that bare our souls before him. Contrary to what you might expect, she isn’t turned off. She is thrilled at the prospect that God knows her profoundly, and yet loves her deeply. And amazingly, she runs off to tell her story to the townspeople. Jesus does more than just hold up a mirror. Yes, he shows us the ugly truth about ourselves—but he does so in order to whet our appetite to hear the good news of God’s love and forgiveness.

Jesus offered this woman both a mirror with which to gaze into her soul, and “living water” with which to quench her thirsty heart. Authentic Biblical faith suspends detachment, and commits itself. Jesus invites all of us to come to him (Matthew 11:25-30)—but tragically, some will not. They will continue to hide behind their self-justifying wisdom and pseudo-intelligence, having convinced themselves that they don’t need God. They don’t need forgiveness, they have within themselves all that they need. And so feeling safe within their cocoon of self-sufficiency, they resist Jesus’ probing questions—to their own eternal demise. Don’t resist. Come to Christ. He is the source of living water. I invite you to receive Christ as the Samaritan woman did, and as many of the townspeople did. It is not complicated. God wants to give you living water—it is freely available in Christ. Will you take and drink?

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**Monday**—Read John 4:3-4

- Jesus **did not** take the normal route from Judea to Galilee; he took the mountainous route which passed through the hostile territory of the Samaritans. Yet v. 4 said that he “had to pass through Samaria”. **In what sense** do you think he “had to” take that route?
- What does this suggest to you about the character of your Lord?



**Tuesday**—Read John 4:6-8

- Jesus is God—yet he was not just “faking” hunger and thirst. Reflect on this fact.
- Read v. 27, 31-34. Was Jesus **truly** no longer hungry and thirsty? What does he mean?

**Wednesday**—Read John 4:7-10

- What is the greatest social taboo you have crossed in order to show kindness to another?

**Thursday**—Read John 4:19-24

- What does it suggest to you that God **seeks** worshipers?
- What misconceptions did you grow up with regarding worship (see v. 20)?

**Friday**—Read John 4:24

- What does it mean to worship God “in spirit”?
- What does it mean to worship God “in truth”?
- Take a moment to worship God.

**Saturday**—Read John 4:31-38 and Ephesians 2:10

- To what degree do you “hunger and thirst” to accomplish the work God has for you to do?
- What can you do to increase your “appetite” for serving God?