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# John 4

John 4.<sup>1-3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, <sup>2</sup>(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) <sup>3</sup>he left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee.

As is the case in this reading, throughout his mortal ministry Jesus was anxious about drawing too much attention to himself. Several individuals—for example, Jairus, whose daughter was raised from the dead, two blind men, Peter, who announced his belief that Jesus was Messiah, and others—were asked to remain quiet about him, what he did, or who he was. There might have been strategic reasons for staying under the radar—for example, a desire to avoid the envy of religious leaders and potential conflict with them. However, it seems likely that Jesus’ attitude during his mortal ministry was the same as that which he expressed to W.W. Phelps from heaven in 1831:

“He hath need to repent, for I, the Lord, am not well pleased with him, *for he seeketh to excel*, and he is not sufficiently meek before me.”<sup>1</sup>

It was inconsistent with the divine character to “seek to excel” or to act out of a desire for “selfish ambition or conceit.”<sup>2</sup> Hence, Paul reminds us that Jesus “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.”<sup>3</sup>

It is a difficult thing Jesus did. It is a difficult area in which to follow him. We humans have extraordinarily fragile egos. We like very much to pump them up by attracting attention and having a reputation for excel(lence). But if we would be true disciples of Jesus, we must check such natural man tendencies. This requires constant vigilance and honest introspection. And even then... well, let’s just be thankful for the opportunities to repent, not once or twice, but over and over again, ad-infinitum.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> DC 58.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Philippians 2.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Philippians 2.<sup>7</sup>

## John 4.<sup>4-6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>And he must needs go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup>Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

It is John's contention that Jesus was "the Word" who had been with God from the beginning and that, in fact, "was God." Consistent with this, it is LDS contention that Jesus is the God, Yahweh. The Old Testament portrays Yahweh as the most incredible of Beings. His power is immense, infinite, and beyond human comprehension. So, when I read that Jesus was "wearied"—exhausted from the normal trials of life and those unique to his calling—I appreciate a little more the sacrifice he made in setting aside his power and glory and coming to earth. I realize a little better how fully he condescended to become like us—"like unto his brethren,"<sup>1</sup> as the writer of Hebrews put it. I realize more fully how completely he took "upon him [our] infirmities."<sup>2</sup> And when I realize how much it cost him to associate with us—with me—my love and appreciation for him grows and my heart is drawn to him. My faith that "he is able to succour them [me] that are tempted"<sup>3</sup> grows firmer. My commitment to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [I] may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"<sup>4</sup> is strengthened.

So, I hope John knows that though it might seem like a trifle to note Jesus' weariness, that trifle has drawn me into a more loving embrace with the Greatest of All. I thank the evangelist for that.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 2.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Alma 7.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 3.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hebrews 4.<sup>16</sup>

## John 4.<sup>7-9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, “Give me to drink.” <sup>8</sup>(For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

<sup>9</sup>Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, “How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”

Jesus was exhausted. That alone might have been justification for avoiding an encounter with anyone. Surely, a few minutes rest could not be viewed as a violation of his call. But, add to Jesus’ exhaustion the fact that his fellow well visitor was a Samaritan and we can double the justifications for avoiding an encounter. Samaritans were apostates. They were unclean. Their uncleanness was contagious. Jesus could not risk defilement.

But this Samaritan had a triple whammy against her. She was a “she.” Jewish men did not associate in any way with other woman—let alone a woman with the sort of checkered past the Samaritan woman at the well possessed and about which we learn more later in the narrative. Even an innocent encounter between unmarried men and women was cause for scandal not unlike a modern scandal of real and physical adultery. So, when Jesus engaged her, even for something as seemingly innocent as a drink of water, the woman was right to question him: “How is it that thou... askest drink of me?” How indeed.

The question we ask ourselves in this meditation is how much like Jesus do we dare be? How daring can we be in associating with those whom society deems undesirable and even defiling? Jesus dared the ultimate scandal in order to serve and bless. How likely is it that a true disciple will manage to avoid scandal as they go out into the world with their message of hope? It seems not likely at all. In fact, it seems that those who claim discipleship and at the same time avoid scandal may just not be disciples at all.

We remember Jesus’ admonition to his disciples on his final night. After washing his disciples feet as a metaphor for service to others that might be less than complimentary, perhaps even humiliating, Jesus admonished them to go and do likewise.<sup>1</sup> Following the invitation to “Come, follow me,” is not without its risks.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> See John 13.<sup>14-17</sup>

## John 4.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Jesus answered and said unto her, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, ‘Give me to drink;’ thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”

The story of Jesus’ encounter with the woman at the well begins with a notice about Jesus’ own personal exhaustion. As we noted in our meditation on the passage (vs. 4-6), this notice is legitimate and reminds us of the sacrifice Jesus made in coming to earth and experiencing all the vicissitudes of life just like us. With this reading, we note that in addition to being weary, Jesus was apparently thirsty too. So, he asked the Samaritan woman for a drink. She asked why he would make such a request of her.

With this, we become mesmerized by the back and forth that takes place between Jesus and the woman. There is much there to mesmerize. But, today, I wish to note this strange fact: nowhere does the narrative inform us that Jesus ever got that much needed drink for which he asked. Now, I am not sure that this was a planned omission of John’s part. He may not have meant the omission to be meaningful, even if he noticed it himself. Nevertheless, we find meaning in the omission. The fact that there is no record of Jesus having his thirst quenched is consistent with all that Jesus said about his personal ministry and about his objectives in coming to earth. Jesus did not come to earth and did not engage, really, with the woman in order to have his own needs met—to have us or the woman serve him. Rather, as he, himself, implied, his reason for engaging her, as with us, was to serve her and to address her needs: “If thou knewest... who it is that saith to thee, ‘Give me to drink;’ thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee.”

But there is more. If the woman had known who he was, she would have known, not only that his engagement with her was driven by his desire to meet her needs, as it is with us, but in hopes that she, learning from him, would go and do likewise. His spirit of service was the basis for the enduring life he had lived for eternity and would live for eternities more to come. If she, herself, would adopt and live Jesus’ life of service rather than being served, this woman would be able to drink the same waters of life from which he drank.

We are invited to drink from those same waters that make possible an enduring existence. We are invited to think on and strive to meet others’ needs and put our own needs aside. And yes, as Jesus, we may suffer some temporal inconveniences in doing and living so. But the sweetness of the “living waters” will more than make up for any minor deprivations that might come our way along the way.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

## John 4.<sup>11-14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>The woman saith unto him, “Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? <sup>12</sup>Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?”

<sup>13</sup>Jesus answered and said unto her, “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: <sup>14</sup>but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

John is very fond of playing off individuals’ trivial misunderstandings as found in the statements or queries they make of or to Jesus. John engages in this play in order to present deeper meanings. Sometimes these plays off misunderstandings take on ironic and even almost comic aspects.

For example, we smile to ourselves when we hear Nicodemus greet Jesus with “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God.”<sup>1</sup> However complimentary Nicodemus meant to be with this greeting, we know that Jesus is “a teacher come from God” in a far deeper sense that Nicodemus appreciated, at least at this first meeting.

The questions with which the woman at the well met Jesus’ offer of “living water” is another example. We almost laugh out loud when she asks, “Art thou greater than our father Jacob?” Why, of course he is. He is greater than Jacob (or any other human being) by a wider margin than she could possibly imagine—more than we imagine, even today, with all our hindsight. We don’t so much laugh as sit up straighter and feel more reverence and humility when she observes that Jesus “has nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.” We know, a little bit anyway, about how unimaginably deep the well is from which Jesus draws water. We know a little bit about how unimaginably difficult the water was and is to access. We know a little about what it cost Jesus to dig this well of living water. How deep into the bowels of earth, into the maw of hell he had to go to accomplish the wonder and make the water available to anyone interested.

Hopefully, too, we know a little about just how superior Jesus’ water is to those of any other well. Jesus’ water satisfies as no other. Its satisfaction never fades. One doesn’t have to keep coming back over and over again to relive the satisfaction. For Jesus accomplishes the greatest wonder of them all when the water begins to bubble up inside us and we become, ourselves, “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” This is the greatest excavation of them all. The excavation of the human heart and soul. The turning of the human heart away from its ways of death to one that acts in ways that produce life—life in ourselves, to be sure, but a source of life that we freely offer to others as Jesus offered his to us.

Oh, yes, he is greater than Jacob. His well is deeper than Jacob’s well. The water of his well is sweeter and more nourishing than the water of Jacob’s well. At so it is with every other digger of wells and every other source of water.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> John 3.<sup>2</sup>

## John 4.<sup>15-18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>The woman saith unto him, “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

<sup>16</sup>Jesus saith unto her, “Go, call thy husband, and come hither.”

<sup>17</sup>The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.”

Jesus said unto her, “Thou hast well said, ‘I have no husband:’ <sup>18</sup>For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.”

The woman who encountered Jesus at the well was surprised and maybe a bit offended at Jesus’ apparent familiarity with her, a Samaritan and a female. Both designations, she seems to have felt, ought to have caused Jesus to keep his distance and avoid her. Witnessing Jesus’ converse with the woman at the well, Jesus’ disciples were also surprised and concerned, so much so that they questioned him about it. No doubt, their concern was based upon the same feelings and perceptions. In addition, they were likely worried about what others might think and the possible spread of gossip and negative rumors about his habits and character—of which there was already too many. Jesus seems remarkably unconcerned, almost cavalier about any blowback from this encounter.

But, in addition to the two strikes we have already seen she had against her, in this reading we discover she had a third: she was a cereal marrier and divorcee who was currently shacking up with some guy. However scandalous this living arrangement has been viewed during my 65 years, plus, it pales in comparison to the scandal it would have caused in Jesus’ time. This woman would likely have been at the bottom of the rung even in Samaritan society. To a religious Jew, she must have been below the lowest. So, yes, Jesus’ encounter with the woman is triply surprising. We might be excused if we join the woman and Jesus’ disciples in surprise. Except, of course, it’s Jesus. He made a habit of thumbing his nose at social etiquette when it came to questions of social hierarchy. He made a habit of hanging out with all the wrong sorts of people.

But because of his willingness to open himself up to personal ridicule by opening himself up to those open to the charge of “sinner,” Jesus is able to open up for the sinner a whole new horizon and a whole new life. This is a reflection of his grace or graciousness. He is as open today as he was then, for he is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. He changes not. And, of course, he leaves us with this invitation: “Follow thou me.” We will certainly not be “*full* of grace and fidelity” as he is, but even the smallest portion of Christlike grace and fidelity can do immeasurable good in the world.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

<sup>19</sup>The woman saith unto him, “Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. <sup>20</sup>Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

<sup>21</sup>Jesus saith unto her, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. <sup>22</sup>Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. <sup>23</sup>But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. <sup>24</sup>God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

After spending just a few brief moments alone with Jesus, the woman at the well made a determination. This man who spoke with her so unexpectedly and comfortably and who seemed to know her in ways he should not, had to be a prophet. So, she presented the dilemma that every other Samaritan likely faced—male or female, child, youth, adult, and aged alike: “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

One could, I suppose, hear in the woman’s statement a challenge to traditional Jewish—and thus, presumably, Jesus’—temple theology. But, if Jesus heard it like this, he paid it no heed. Instead, it treated it like the sincere question that it seems to have been: “Where is the appropriate place to worship God?” Or, maybe even more personally, “Where can I find God?”

Jesus answered that the where is less important than the how. In fact, in the future, indeed in the very present, the how will be everything. And how *does* one come to God? How must one conduct themselves in order to commune with him? They must come “in spirit and in truth.” No doubt, this means many things. But, as a baseline, one must come impassioned and sincere. Here, we read “spirit,” in the same sense that we might read the words, “school spirit.” We must possess “God spirit.” We must be filled with a desire for him such as the Psalmist expressed:

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks,  
so panteth my soul after thee, O God.  
My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:  
when shall I come and appear before God?”<sup>1</sup>

We must be honest. We must reveal every thought. We must mean every word we say. Nothing can be hidden. There can be no “hypocrisy and no deception before God.” There must be “real intent.”<sup>2</sup> Imagine our surprise when we find a God who “is Spirit.” We won’t worry so much about what this *doesn’t* mean that we will miss at least a little part of what it *does* mean. And the little part that this does mean is positively huge. Humongous. Gargantuan. God is as full of “spirit” as we are. Nay, a million times more. Nay, limitless times more. He is as excited and enthusiastic about having us come to him and we are to come to him. He is far more devoted to us than we are to him. It will not be an equal trade. We will get far more than we give. And we can discover these truths about God anywhere. Anytime. In any garb. Indeed, in this very hour.

Even so, come, Lod Jesus!

(edition: may 22, 2024)

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 42.<sup>1-2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 2 Nephi 31.<sup>13</sup>



## John 4.<sup>25-30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>The woman saith unto him, “I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.”

<sup>26</sup>Jesus saith unto her, “I that speak unto thee am he.”

<sup>27</sup>And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, “What seekest thou?” or, “Why talkest thou with her?”

<sup>28</sup>The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, <sup>29</sup>“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

<sup>30</sup>Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

On one occasion during his earthly ministry, Jesus entered the home of two women. Sisters. One of them, Luke informs us, “was distracted by all the preparations” necessary to his visit, while the other “sat at Jesus’ feet” listening to him teach. Upon the first sister’s complaint about the other’s lack of help in the preparations, Jesus suggested that the distractions of the first was keeping her from choosing, as the second sister did, the “one thing [that] is needful.” We know the sisters’ names: Martha and Mary, respectively. And we know that Mary, in focusing her attention on Jesus and the words of God that he spoke, chose “that good part.”<sup>1</sup>

The woman at the well goes unnamed. To this day, she remains anonymous: “The Woman at the Well.” And yet, she demonstrates the same wisdom as the storied Mary. She too, gave up distraction for focused attention on Jesus. We see this rejection of distraction and her new focus, I sense, when, after her extended encounter with Jesus, the Evangelist informs us that she “left her waterpot, and went her way into the city.” What need had she of the waterpot? The well water that had been her objective in going to the well was no longer the priority. There was something far better than well water to be found there. Something far more important than water now held her attention and dictated her relationships with others. “Come,” she invited any who would hear, “see a man! A man who just might be Messiah.”

Yes, in the seemingly mundane observation that the woman abandoned her waterpot, we witness her follow the counsel Jesus had given in another place to another group of listeners: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.”<sup>2</sup> All else is simply icing on the cake. The example of this anonymous “Woman at the Well” was as good as any Paul might have offered when he admonished the Colossians, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”<sup>3</sup> The example of this still anonymous woman in rejecting distractions and focusing attention on Jesus can inspire us today. No doubt, she would say to us, “Go and do likewise.”

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> See Luke 10.<sup>38-42</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Mathew 6.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Colossians 3.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>31</sup>In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, “Master, eat.”

<sup>32</sup>But he said unto them, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.”

<sup>33</sup>Therefore said the disciples one to another, “Hath any man brought him ought to eat?”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus saith unto them, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Upon arriving in the vicinity of the Samaritan city, Sychar, how ever many of Jesus’ disciples who were accompanying him left him to enter the city and buy food. During their absence, Jesus was engaged in his famous encounter with a Samaritan woman. The woman was surprised by Jesus’ comfortable request that she, an unclean Samaritan and a women, fetch him a drink of water from the well at which he sat relaxing from his wearying journey. Responding to her surprise, Jesus informed her that if she had understood to whom she was talking, *she* would have asked *him* drink, for he had a drink that was not apparent to her—a drink she knew not of, which he called “living water.”<sup>1</sup> Eventually, because of the woman’s sincerity and testimony, Jesus revealed with a clearness unusual for him, that he was Messiah.

The encounter between Jesus and the woman continued until the return of his disciples. They “marvelled that he talked with the woman.” This marveling, however, they did silently, not daring to question him about the propriety of his actions. With the woman’s departure, the disciples urged Jesus to eat. He was surely hungry. His reply to his disciples’ urging shows how very similar his disciples and the Samaritan woman were. How so? you ask, puzzled and, perhaps, a tad scandalized at the suggestion. Listen to Jesus’ reply:

“I have [food] to eat that ye know not of.”

How similar to what Jesus had earlier told the woman which was, essentially: “I have water that ye know not of.” Jesus was, he informed his disciples, nourished above all else by something that they could not see and had not discerned: “do[ing] the will of him that sent me, and... finish[ing] his work.” Jesus’ principal aim in life—and beyond—he informed the Samaritan woman, was to provide a nourishment to others that they, like her, could not see and had not discerned: giving “living waters.” How similar we all are to the undiscerning woman and undiscerning disciples! How blind we so often are to his expectations of and hopes for us. And yet and still, he endures our ignorance, patiently teaching, patiently waiting for us to understand and discern what cannot be seen.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

(*edition: may 22, 2024*)

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<sup>1</sup> See John 4.<sup>5-10</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Say not ye, “There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?” Behold, I say unto you, “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. <sup>36</sup>And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. <sup>37</sup>And herein is that saying true, ‘One soweth, and another reapeth.’ <sup>38</sup>I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”

After an arduous journey from Judea, Jesus and his disciples came to halt at a well outside the Samaritan village of Sychar. While Jesus rested, his disciples went into the village to purchase food for the entourage. While they were absent, Jesus had an extended encounter with a Samaritan woman who came to the well to draw water. When the disciples returned, they were surprised to find Jesus freely conversing with the woman, though they asked no explanation or offered any rebuke. They did, however, invite Jesus to join them in eating the rations purchased in the city. For the moment, Jesus refused the nourishment, telling them that he was nourished by doing and finishing the work his Father had given him to do. Again, we hear no response or rebuke from the disciples. Nevertheless, Jesus says,

“Say not ye, ‘There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?’”

This statement seems to capture a thought that crossed the disciples’ minds as Jesus explained his reason for not eating in that moment. It is likely that this was a popular saying, meaning something like, “What’s the rush?” “There is plenty of time to relax right now.” “Relax now, work later.” Something along these lines. Jesus’ response was immediate and urgent.

“Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

No doubt, the disciples cared about Jesus and wanted him to take care of himself. They were simply being wise, as Jesus asked them to be on more than one occasion. But Jesus knew that time was short and that there was much to do. If there ever was a time to relax, this was not one of them: not for Jesus and not for Jesus’ disciples. There were many people ready to be gathered into the kingdom of God. So, Jesus invited them to look more carefully and rethink their rather cavalier attitude about the present and its needs.

As we consider Jesus’ sense of urgency, we wonder what application it has for us, for our service, and for our times. We wonder if we, like Jesus’ disciples on that day, are rather too cavalier about the seriousness of the present conditions, the world’s needs, and the numbers who are looking to be rescued from them. We wonder what more we can do to help in the Lord’s harvest of souls. We wonder, truly, how much more time we have.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

<sup>39</sup>And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, “He told me all that ever I did.”

<sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. <sup>41</sup>And many more believed because of his own word; <sup>42</sup>and said unto the woman, “Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

In the 46<sup>th</sup> section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord discusses various spiritual gifts that are available to those who come to Christ and have faith in him. Those listed are certainly not the only gifts, but what gifts they are! One of the gifts mentioned is that of believing the testimony of others as they testify “that Jesus Christ is the Son of God...” Such believers have the promise of “eternal life.”<sup>1</sup>

In our readings from John 4, we have witnessed the encounter between Jesus and the woman at the well. We have watched her conversion. We have heard the testimony she bore to other villagers: “is not this the Christ?” And we have been heartened to read that many villagers believed on Jesus “for the saying of the woman.” Here, perhaps, we are seeing an example of the gift to believe on other’s words catalogued in DC 46. These villagers’ testimony of Jesus by this means would have sufficed for their salvation.

DC 46 catalogues another spiritual gift: “To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God...<sup>2</sup> This, not through the words of others, but through some personal experience. It seems that many villages also experienced this spiritual gift. “We believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

To know, by any means, that Jesus is the Christ and to learn to trust him is glorious and saving. It is a gift beyond any other. No one can possess all the gifts. “To some is given one, and to some is given another.”<sup>3</sup> And yet, we can add to our gifts. We seem to see this multiplication of gifts at work in the villagers’ lives. First, they were convinced that Jesus was Messiah by the words of the woman at the well. Then, because they went in search of Jesus themselves and sought to have their own encounter with him, they can to know, not only his title, but the impact of that title in their own lives.

Here, we think of the Psalmist who, having heard of “the beauty of the LORD,” and having believed that report, nevertheless heard another more personal word, even the word of God: “Seek ye my face.” Inspired by the generous invitation, the Psalmist faithfully responded, “Thy face, LORD, will I seek.”<sup>4</sup> I too can testify with the woman, with the villagers, and with the Psalmist that the Lord is not far away but nigh at hand.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: may 22, 2024)*

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<sup>1</sup> DC 46.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>2</sup> DC 46.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>3</sup> DC 46.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Palm 27.<sup>4, 8</sup>