

1. I want to share a passage of scripture with you today that I don't believe I have ever used, or even related to Christmas.
2. And yet this passage conveys the message that has been burning in me for the past several weeks.

**TEXT:** **John 4:4-10** He had to go through Samaria on the way. **5** Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. **7** Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." **8** He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. **9** The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?" **10** Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." (NLT)

**TITLE:** **The Gift**

**INTRO:**

1. All of my life I have heard this passage or scripture called the story of the woman at the well.
2. And that is accurate. This is an account of a Samaritan woman who Jesus met at a well.
3. But the most important aspect of this story was not the woman per se. and it is not the well.
4. The most important aspect of the story is what Jesus offers this woman at the well.
5. Jesus is traveling with his disciples. They are hungry, so they stop near a small village called Sychar.
6. Outside the village is a well known as Jacob's well. Jesus, weary and exhausted from traveling stops at the well to rest, while his disciples go into the village to buy some food.
7. As he is sitting there, probably in the shade, along comes this woman. We do not know her name.
8. In fact, we are not really given much of a description of her at all. But based on the setting, there are some things we can pick up on that give us some insight into who she was.

9. More than likely, because she was getting water from the well and not her servant, this woman was a peasant.
10. She is from a tiny village that is not of much significance.
11. She is of a more mature age, and she is not known to have a good reputation. According to verse 18, she has had 5 husbands and the man she is living with now is not her husband.
12. Jesus did ask her for a drink of water, but the fact that she talked so much was an indication that she might have been kind of flirty. Constantly looking for a man to engage her in conversation.
13. But when she speaks, it is also obvious that she is prone to argument and disagreement.
14. Jesus is very seriously talking to her about her soul and she just kind of laughs it off.
15. So we have this woman who is probably not someone you would bring home to mother, and here is Jesus, exhausted from his travels, and yet he saw something in her worth redeeming.
16. He saw in her something of value. He saw not what she was or what she had been, but he saw her for what she could be if she would just believe and receive the truth of who Jesus was.
17. I am so grateful that the bible includes this interaction between Jesus and this woman, because it is a reminder to us that no matter how messy, how messed up, how arrogant, or prideful, or how much we misunderstand, Jesus is a savior who loves us so much that he is willing to meet us where we are. Warts, sins, failures, and all.
18. Sometimes we need to be reminded that no matter where we are, Jesus knows exactly our condition and our situation, and he is not turned off or repulsed by the truth of our messiness.
19. The Lord doesn't ask you to get all cleaned up before you come to him, he tells us to come just like we are.
20. The cleaning up and the changing is something he does after we receive his love.
21. And this love, along with several other blessings are a wonderful gift from the Lord. In fact, that is exactly what Jesus calls it. A gift.

22. John 4:10 Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." (NLT)
23. What's interesting is that in spite of her messed up condition, this woman had some biblical and spiritual knowledge.
24. According to verse 20 she was no stranger to worship.
25. According to verse 25 she was aware of and waiting for the coming of the Messiah.
26. But in spite of that she never really had a clear understanding of The Gift that God had for her through the person of Jesus Christ.
27. The life the Lord has for us is more than just theology or information.
28. It is more than just tradition or knowledge. The life the Lord has for us as a life filled with hope. He offers us living water.
29. Something that satisfies. Something that fills. Something that quenches the thirsting and the longing that we have for something better.
30. In all the hustle and the bustle. In all the craziness going on in our world. May I remind you this morning that the Lord has a gift for you. And that gift is eternal life.
31. Whether you've never accepted Jesus as savior, or if you have been serving Him for years, the gift that he has just for you is something priceless, special, and fulfilling. It is life giving.
32. Allow me just a moment to share three aspects of this gift.
33. The first part of the gift is...

## Forgiveness.

1. It is not spelled out clearly for us, but something miraculous must have happened in this woman's life because we see a drastic transformation take place.
2. She shifts from arguing with Jesus to being a witness for him. John 4:28-29 The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, 29 "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?"

3. Come see a man who told me everything I ever did. I'm not so sure if you were teaching a witnessing class you would advise folks to open with, he told me everything I ever did.
4. I get nervous and depressed just thinking about everything I ever did. Everything I have ever done is not pretty. We know it wasn't pretty for her either.
5. The only way she could be comfortable saying, come see a man who told me everything I ever did is if she had been forgiven for everything she had ever done.
6. The only way my sinful past can be a good thing is if I have been forgiven of that past, and the Lord no longer holds my past against me.
7. And yet, that is exactly the nature of the gift the Lord offers us.
8. When the Lord forgives us it ushers in a clean like we have never felt.
9. When the Lord forgives us, it is like it never happened. **Psalm 103:12**  
He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. (NLT)
10. That my friend is the type of freedom the Lord gives us. Not a forgiveness that leaves us chained to our sinful past, but a forgiveness that delivers us from our sinful past.
11. Have you received the gift of forgiveness? I am talking to unbelievers as well as believers?
12. Have you accepted Jesus as your savior? And if you have, are you still experiencing the cleansing freedom that His forgiveness brings?
13. His gift is one of forgiveness, not condemnation. Stop beating yourself up. Your heavenly father doesn't, and he doesn't like anybody mistreating his kids. That includes how you treat yourself.
14. The second part of the gift is...

### **Favor.**

1. **John 4:9** The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. (NLT)
2. Actually, that description of the relationship between Jews and Samaritans isn't strong enough. Jews commonly called Samaritans dogs, not only behind their backs, but to their face.

3. Jews considered themselves to be highly superior to Samaritans because Jews were full blooded, and Samaritans were half- blooded Israelites.
4. Again, though it doesn't spell it out, we can be sure that Jesus didn't talk to or treat her like a dog, like he was superior, and she was inferior.
5. He talked to her like she was a daughter.
6. That has to be true because no village of people would run out to see a man who they thought was going to mistreat them.
7. In her past she was a dog. But in her future, she was a daughter of the king.
8. May I remind you of your position in the kingdom of God? As a child of God you have been given favor.
9. Psalm 30:5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime! Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning. (NLT)
10. Is your relationship with the Lord one in which you relate to him as an angry God most of the time, or as a God who has bestowed favor on you?
11. You are not a dog. You are a son or daughter of the king.
12. Someone, somewhere probably treated you like a dog at one time or another, but that someone was not and never will be the Lord.
13. He gives you the gift of favor.
14. And the third part of his gift to us is...

## Future.

1. Forgiveness and favor are only really valuable when we have a future in which to share them.
2. Your deliverance. Your forgiveness. Your freedom. Your favor, are not just so your past can be erased, but so your future can be established.
3. John 4:39 Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did! (NLT)
4. John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world." (NLT)

5. The result of this woman finding forgiveness and favor was that the Lord used her to lead others to find forgiveness and favor.
6. It may sound strange, but if we are not using the forgiveness and favor, we have been given to share Jesus with others, the effects of our forgiveness and favor start to diminish and weaken and fade.
7. If we are not using our forgiveness and favor to regularly share the love of Jesus with others, our forgiveness and favor start to feel less like a gift and more like a grind.
8. Stale. Stagnant. Dead. But the gift is intended for something much better.
9. Colossians 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (NIV)
10. Who has been chosen to make known the glorious riches, and the hope of glory? Those who have Christ in them.
11. You see, forgiveness in and favor in has to result in our releasing and sharing hope with others, or the hope begins to seem a lot less like hope and a whole lot more like hopelessness.

Conclusion: Look at April.

1. Nothing kills the gift of God like not living with purpose.
2. As a child of God you have purpose.
3. Colossians 1:28 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. (NIV)
4. The purpose of the gift is to share the gift.
5. Are you experiencing forgiveness, freedom, and cleansing from your past? Or are you still chained to condemnation and feeling dirty? Take his gift.
6. Are you living like you are a son or daughter, or are you living like an inferior dog? Take his gift.
7. Prayer. Lord I receive this gift from you. Thank you for the gift of forgiveness and a future.
8. Now, I challenge you to do something with the gift. Give it to others.
9. Present yourself to the lord so that others can know Jesus and become mature in their faith.
10. Prayer. Help me give the gift to others.