

## Improved Uniform International SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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Lesson for January 17

JESUS THE WATER OF LIFE

LESSON TEXT—John 4:7-26.

GOLDEN TEXT—Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. John 4:14.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Jesus Answering a Woman's Question.

JUNIOR TOPIC—How a Stranger Became a Friend.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Jesus Meets My Greatest Needs.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Jesus Meets Our Deepest Need.

Life, light, water, bread are elemental, fundamental things. Life must come from God. But it can exist only where there is light, and only God gives light. Nor can life continue where there is no water and no bread.

It is therefore a blessed and significant fact that Jesus was declared to be the life of men. He also says of himself that he is the "light of the world" (John 9:5); "the bread of life" (John 6:35). In our lesson today we see him as the one who gives "living water" (v. 10).

The incident at Jacob's well in Sychar took place when Jesus, leaving Jerusalem because of increasing hindrance to his work, goes up to Galilee. Unlike his Jewish brethren, who detoured around the land of the hated "half-breed" Samaritans, he "must needs go through Samaria," for there was a sick soul that needed him.

Space will not permit a full consideration of all the beauty and the depth of spiritual truth found in this story, but let us note that we here have

I. A Sinner Tactfully Approached (vv. 7-15).

Every Christian is by his very calling a soul-winner. We dare not delegate this responsibility to the pastor or missionary. As soul-winners we are vitally interested in our Lord's approach to this woman who was far from God, apparently hopelessly involved in sinful associations, a citizen of a hostile nation and an adherent of another religious faith.

By asking a favor of her tactfully placed himself (as does any petitioner) for the moment, on her own plane. He was not a distant, learned religious leader deigning to cast a bit of religious philosophy to her. He was a tired, thirsty man asking for a drink of water.

But he was more! He was the gracious Son of God, declaring to her that he was ready to give to her the water of life.

II. A Moral Problem Faced (vv. 16-18).

One may speak knowingly of the promises of God's Word, and may understand the "way of salvation," but one will never find peace and joy until there is a frank and open facing of sin in the life. Let us make no mistake at this point, for the moral law of God is the same now as it was on that far-off day when Jesus brought the woman of Samaria face to face with her own sin.

III. A Theological Problem Solved (vv. 19-24).

Possibly in an effort to evade her moral problem by theological discussion (a common practice in our day, too!) and partly because of her ignorance of true worship, she asks a question about a controversial matter relating to outward ceremony. Is it not a singular thing how men who know nothing of spiritual life delight in the propagation and defense of organizations, and in the conduct of outward religious exercises?

True worship is revealed (v. 23) as being (1) "In spirit." We do not cast aside all external helps to worship, but real worship goes through and beyond both place and symbol to real soul-communion with God (2) "In truth." Sham, superstition, hypocrisy; have no place in true worship. We can worship in truth only when we really know the truth. MacLaren rightly said, "The God to whom men attain by any other path than his historical revelation of himself is a dim, colorless abstraction, a perversion, an object of fear or hope, as may be, but not of knowledge." Truly spoke Jesus—"We know what we worship" (v. 22).

IV. The Messiah Declared (vv. 25, 26).

Jesus honors this poor fallen woman by making to her his first declaration of himself as the Messiah. He is the high and exalted one, but he is at the same time the friend of sinners. To the learned ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, he spoke of the new birth. To the poor woman of Samaria he declares his Messiahship. He is no respecter of persons. Neither are those who truly follow him.

And she forthright left her water pot and went to bring others to him. Let every "sinner saved by grace" go and do likewise.

Window of Hope "Eternity" is the divine treasure house, and hope is the window, by means of which mortals are permitted to see as through a glass darkly, the things which God is preparing. —Mountford.

## Oft-Married Woman Meets Up With Reality Of Religion

An Old Story With Modern Meanings ---- A Traveller's Memories Of A Historic Spot --- Clear Words Of Authority Upon The True Nature Of Religion.

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS

Hot and thirsty, in a dry land, I too, have sought refreshment at the old, old well dug by Jacob nearly four thousand years ago. Strangely, the first and abiding impression of this historic hole in the ground was of the rutted and grooved and worn limestone curb of this ancient source of water. My thoughts of the woman of Sychar, and of the thirsty One whom she found at the well-side, are mingled with thoughts of the thousands of other women, weary from labor, who had pulled ropes and thongs over that well-curb so that the deep marks remain until this day. One of civilization's real emancipations for western women is that most of them have been delivered from the burden of water-carrying. A big jar of water on an oriental woman's head looks attractive in pictures; but heft that jar, as I have done, and the romance disappears.

Unworthy as was His auditor of any consideration except scorn, Jesus yet dealt with her as one capable of receiving loftiest spiritual truth—a notable instance of His invariable respect for personality. Hear His sublime words—a new doctrine in mankind's thinking—"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Totem-Pole Religion Tribal totem-pole religion has always prevailed amongst most of mankind. Local gods with fixed ritual of fear, have been erected by the world. Even today there are Christians who exalt their own denomination or sect above the King-dom of God.

"The well is deep," said the Samaritan woman. She spoke truly, for on one of my visits to Jacob's Well I found that it was a hundred feet down to the water; and the water itself is thirty-five feet deep. The Greek priests have rigged a portable windlass over the well, with a small wire cable and a copper pulley, so that drawing water is now easy. The water itself is crystal clear, cold and refreshing, an unforgettable draught.

A Flippant Woman Weary on the dusty journey a-foot northward from Jerusalem, Jesus and His company had reached Jacob's companions went on to the village to buy food. A village woman came to draw water, and He asked of her the common courtesy of a drink. She, frivolous and flirtatious, the sort who seeks to daily with every man she meets, delayed the drink while she tried to draw the Stranger into a conversation.

At once the Master put the talk upon a high plane. (How prodigal He always was of most profound truth to even the unworthiest individuals!) He spoke of "Living water"; she retorted with a jibe about His helplessness and the depth of the memorial of Patriarch Jacob, Jesus Himself claimed that He was the Expected One.

The Great Avowal There is a terrific climax to this lesson. To this hen-minded woman of loose life, least worthy of all audiences—although she was subdued and solemnized and changed by the interview—Jesus avowed, in clear-cut unequivocal terms that He was the Christ, the Messiah who was to come. Once that news had set the heavens to ringing, above Bethlehem's hills. Here, alongside of the memorial of Patriarch Jacob, Jesus Himself claimed that He was the Expected One.

Light On Recent News Our world's recent absorption in the greatest news story since the War comes inevitably to mind as we read this interview by Jacob's Well. For Jesus was dealing with an off-divorced woman, one who had passed beyond the pale of life's conventional sanctities. He, knowing all about her, had bidden her bring her husband, whereat she stoutly denied that she had any husband.

Followed words that strike to the heart of our modern divorce problem: "Thou hast well said, 'I have no husband'; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS

More men fail through lack of purpose than through lack of talent.—W. A. Sunday.

You cannot make Christ known if you do not know Him.—Bishop Johnson.

All are but parts of one stupendous

ous whole, Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.—Pope.

It is sweet to walk with God; we walk in the wilderness today, and the promised land tomorrow.—D. L. Moody.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—Rom. 12: 21.

O fear not in a world like this, And thou shalt know ere long— Know how sublime a thing it is To suffer and be strong.—Longfellow.

Study rather to fill your mind than your coffers; knowing that gold and silver were originally mingled with dirt until avarice or ambition parted them.—Seneca.

Arguing And Practicing

This part Samaritan woman was ready to argue about religion, but not to practice it. She tried to turn aside the searching personal application of truth by the Wayfarer into a theological dispute about the relative merits of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, under whose shadow they were at the moment, versus Mount Zion. Like many another since, the woman was orthodox in her creed, but not something to be practiced. When one's creed looms larger than one's deeds, then the soul is in peril.

Special music will be furnished by the girls chorus, under the direction of Mrs. Dan H. Tyndall.

10:35 a. m.—Assembly for lesson study under the direction of Superintendent Walter J. Krick. Several important announcements are to be made in launching our "Attendance and Evangelism Campaign."

Be sure to be present and get your pin!

6:00 p. m.—Senior Epworth League devotional meeting.

7:00 p. m.—Evening service of prayer and praise. The pastor's theme will be, "Emmanuel's Men."

Who are they? How much depends upon them?

First St. U. B. Church

Luke Martin, pastor

Sunday School, 9:30 a. m. Gerold Brodbeck, superintendent.

Sermon, 10:30 a. m. by pastor.

Bible study, 6:30 p. m. Rev. Martin.

Junior C. E., 6:30 p. m. Miss Bell.

Mid week prayer service Wednesday night at 7:30 p. m. R. W. Wynn leader.

Wednesday, 7 p. m.—Mid-week study and prayer hour.

Eighth St. U. B. Church

Luke Martin, pastor

Sunday School, 9:30 a. m. Gerold Brodbeck, superintendent.

Sermon, 10:30 a. m. by pastor.

Bible study, 6:30 p. m. Rev. Martin.

Junior C. E., 6:30 p. m. Miss Bell.

Mid week prayer service Wednesday night at 7:30 p. m. R. W. Wynn leader.

You are cordially invited to attend all of our services. Come and worship with us.

St. Marys Church

First Mass 7:00

Children's Mass 8:30

High Mass 9:45

Prayer Hour 2:00

First Evangelical Church

George S. Lozler, Minister

9:15 a. m.—Sunday School. Mr. R. McCoy, superintendent.

10:10 a. m.—Worship Service.

Exchange of pulpits. A guest preacher, assigned by the Decatur Ministerial Association.

6:15 p. m.—Intermediate and Senior Christian Endeavor.

7:00 p. m.—Evening Service. Sermon theme: "Leaves Only"

7:30 p. m.—Monday—Albright Brotherhood Meeting.

7:00 p. m.—Wednesday—Prayer Meeting.

8:00 p. m.—Wednesday—Choir Rehearsal.

3:00 p. m.—Saturday—Mission Band Meeting.

First U. B. Church

H. W. Franklin, pastor

Brotherhood meeting was a decided success, over 125 men and boys partook of the banquet in the social rooms of the church. Howard Wischaupt delivered one of his great lectures on "Fit and Misses," and demonstrated to a large audience by having three men of different types to stand with him as he proceeded to tell how to place in positions of life the different types of men.

W. M. A. will meet with Mrs. Charles Robinson, Wednesday afternoon at 2 p. m.

Otterbein Guild girls postponed their regular meeting until next week.

A hard time social at the church next Friday night. Mrs. Ralph Roop and Mrs. Earl Crider are on the committee.

Change of pulpits Sunday morning. We hope for a large audience to hear our guest preacher. Nine ministers will be in different pulpits Sunday morning.

Sunday School, 9:15 a. m. with

7:00 p. m.—Evening worship ser-

vices. The pastor will bring an evangelistic message.

The mid-week service will be held Wednesday evening at 7:30.

Nazarene Tabernacle

Paul Brandyberry Pastor

9:30 a. m. Sunday School.

10:30 a. m. Morning worship.

6:45 p. m. Young Peoples Society

Theme—"Going Forward in 1937"

7:30 p. m. Evening worship.

7:30 p. m. Weds., Prayer meeting.

The pastor will bring an evangelistic message.

The mid-week service will be held Wednesday evening at 7:30.

K. of C. Organizes Against Communism, Similar Foes

Grand Rapids, Mich., Jan. 9.—

The Knights' Crusade has challenged in this movement.

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