

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • TV-009A

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John 4:10

“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.”

I’m reading from the book of **John chapter 4:10**; *“And 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.”*

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples had left Judea to go to Galilee. And the Scripture said, *“He must needs go through Samaria.”*

At about 12 noon the Lord Jesus and the disciples came to Jacob’s well. And the Bible says that the Lord being weary with the journey sat down on the well and His disciples went into the city to buy food.

And while they were gone to buy food and the Lord was sitting alone on the well a woman from Samaria came to draw water. When she came to the well the Lord Jesus said to her, *“Give me to drink.”*

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And the woman replied; *“Why do you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a Samaritan? The Samaritans and the Jews have no dealings with one another.”* And the Lord Jesus said; *“Woman if you knew the gift of God and who it is that saith unto thee give me to drink; you would have asked of me and I would have given you living water.”*

Now my subject today is: **“IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK.”**

Now, there are several things about this woman I want to point out to you. And while I'm pointing out these things that are characteristic of this Samaritan woman; you see if you don't see our day and our generation in her, the characteristics of our day in this same Samaritan woman.

First of all: She was a very religious person.

She was no stranger to the Bible. She was no stranger to Abraham and Jacob and Isaac. In **verse 12** she said, *“Are thou greater than our father Jacob who gave us this well, who drank of the water with his children and with his family?”*

She talked about worshipping God. She talked about her father Jacob. She knew Bible characters. She knew Bible history. She knew Bible language. She was a very religious woman.

Secondly: She was not only religious but she upheld her denomination on tradition.

She said, *“Why do you ask me for a drink? Don't you know that Jews hath no dealings with the Samaritans?”*

And then in **verse 20** she said to the Lord; *“You Jews say that the place to worship is down in Jerusalem. We Samaritans worship in the mountains. Our fathers have always worshipped in the mountains and their fathers worship in the mountains and their fathers before them. We worship in this mountain and we don't have any dealings with you Jews who worship in Jerusalem.”*

She was a Samaritan. She was a devout Samaritan and she let the Lord know this. She was a very religious woman, and she was a woman who held to the tradition of her fathers. She held strongly to her denominational customs.

Thirdly: Then another thing about this woman; she was looking for the coming of the Lord.

That's right! Down here in **verse 25**; listen to what she said to Christ; *“I know that Messiah cometh. And when the Messiah comes He's going to tell us all things.”*

She fully expected to be included in the kingdom of the Lord. She fully expected to meet God in glory. She fully expected that all would be well with her. She was looking for the coming of the Messiah.

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now the fourth thing about this woman; (now follow each one of these things; they're true). She was a religious woman. But you say, "This woman was a great sinner. She had been married five times and was living in adultery with a man who was not her husband."

I know that but she was a religious woman. She knew something about Bible characters and Bible language and she knew something about Bible history. And she talked about worshipping God. And she upheld her denominational traditions. She held to the customs of her father, the religious customs. She practiced what they practiced.

And then another thing; she was looking for the coming of the Messiah. She says that here; "The Messiah's coming. I know that He's coming. I know Him. And when He comes everything will be all right. He's going to tell us all that we want to know."

But now here's the tragic thing about this woman; she did not know the Lord. Our master said to her down here in **verse 22**; "You worship; that's true, you worship in this mountain and the Jews worship in Jerusalem. But you don't know what you worship. You don't know God. You're worshipping an unknown God. You're going through the form of worship and the motion of worship but you don't know God."

And then listen to Him in our text; "*If you knew the gift of God.*" Now Christ is the gift of God. He is God's unspeakable gift and the gift of God is eternal life through Christ the Lord. God gave His Son. Christ is the gift.

"If you knew the gift of God, if you knew who it is that's talking to you; you'd ask of me and I'd give you living water." Do you see our day in this woman?

Let me show you:

First of all, men today like this woman are very religious. Everybody's religious today. We have more religion today per square inch than we've ever had in the history of mankind. We're not strangers to God. Everybody knows about God. Everybody in some form or other uses the word God either as a curse word or some way; they use the name God.

We believe the Bible. We know something about Bible history. We know about the creation and the Ark and the flood and the blood on the door posts in Egypt and the law given at Sinai. We know Bible history.

We know about David and the sling and Goliath the giant and Saul and all these other Bible stories. We know about the birth of Christ, His crucifixion and His resurrection. We observe Easter. We observe Lent. We observe Christmas and all these holy days. We observe today.

We know Bible events. We know Bible characters. We talk about death, judgment, heaven, and hell. We talk about Abraham, David, Paul, Peter, James, and John. This is a religious day. Practically everybody's got some religious background.

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And then another thing like this woman; men today uphold their traditions. They uphold their religious customs, their family customs, and their denominational traditions. We have all manner of names. She said, *“The Jews, have no dealings with the Samaritans.”*

Well today, the Baptists have no dealings with the Presbyterians and the Presbyterians have no dealings with the Methodists. And the Methodists have no dealings with the Catholics and the Catholics have no dealings with somebody else.

We all have our denominational traditions, our customs that we uphold and defend and fight for and claim to believe; “We worship in this mountain. You worship in Jerusalem.”

“We worship on Saturday and you worship on Sunday. We have our priests and you have your pastors. We have a book of prayer and you pray extemporaneously. We sing Psalms and you sing hymns. We use no instruments and you use an organ.”

“We kneel and you stand. We sprinkle and you immerse. We wear robes and you don’t. Our tradition is the tradition of our fathers. We do what we were taught to do and then we hand it down to our children and they hand it down to their children. And it goes on down the line. We’re from a long line of a certain kind of denomination.”

That’s what this woman was. She stood there face to face with the Lord of glory and argued about her religious traditions. She was a religious woman. And she was practicing and upholding and defending her religious traditions that she had gotten from somebody else.

“Our fathers worship in this mountain. You worship in Jerusalem. You’re a Jew and I’m a Samaritan. You don’t have any dealings with me and I don’t have any dealings with you.”

And then another thing about this woman that is true of men today, like this woman, are looking for the coming of the Lord. All religions, all denominations have a messiah who either has come or will come.

Now stop and think with me a minute. No matter what the tradition, no matter what the custom, no matter what the denomination, they all have a Jesus, they have a Spirit, and they have a Gospel. All have a Jesus, a Spirit, and a Gospel.

Now Paul said in **2 Corinthians 11**; *“It may be another Jesus whom we have not preached. It may be another spirit.”* And brethren; there are spirits everywhere. We’re living surrounded by a spiritual world. Satan is even called an evil spirit.

John said, *“Try the spirits whether they be of God. There are many antichrists and false spirits that are gone out into this world.”* We’re surrounded by them, even angels; *“Even Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, a minister of righteousness.”*

Oh yes; they’re spirits out there, demon spirits, and all kind of spirits, and the Holy Spirit. And Paul said, *“It might be another Gospel.”*

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

But it's a Jesus and it's a Spirit and it's a Gospel for which men are contending like this woman. She said, "*The Messiah's coming.*" Oh He's coming. And when He comes everything's going to be all right. When He comes He's going to straighten everything out.

"When He comes we're going to have peace and joy." She didn't know Him but she said, "When He comes everything's going to be all right. He's going to tell us everything we need to know."

She was fully looking for the Messiah. She was religious and so are we. She upheld the traditions of her fathers, not knowing what they meant, but she upheld them. And she was looking for the coming of a Messiah.

Fourthly: In which we are very much like her, in which we have in common with her; she didn't know the Lord. And I fear that's true of most men today, they do not know the living God. David said, "*As the heart panteth for the water brooks, my soul panteth for thee the living God.*"

I don't want to just have a God do you? I want to know the living God. I don't want to just worship I know not what. I don't want to worship just any idol of my imagination; I want to know the living God.

Christ said, "*This is eternal life that they might know thee, the true and living God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*" If you knew the gift of God.

Christ looked at this woman in all of her religion, steeped in religion, bound by tradition, following the customs and patterns that had been handed down to her, looking for a Messiah, but standing face to face with Him and not knowing Him and not recognizing Him.

He said, "*Oh if you just knew the gift of God and who it is who is speaking to you, you would ask me and I'd give you living water.*"

Step into the fashionable cathedral or church on this Sunday morning where men and women are going through the mere formality of worship and there's so much of that; you know what I'm talking about.

Oh the ritualism, oh the formalism, oh the ceremonialism, where men and women are going through the mere formality of a Sunday morning religion, praying prayers they do not mean, confessing sins they do not feel, singing hymns they do not believe, professing a profession that they do not have.

Look into the face of those formalistic, legalistic, ritualistic, people, and say, "If you knew, if you knew, if you knew the gift of God you would lay aside this formalism and fall at His feet in genuine repentance and cry for mercy and ask of Him and He would give you living water, if you knew."

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

If you knew you were in the presence of the Son of God, if you knew you were in the presence of the living Lord, you wouldn't go through the motions of playing church. Why, you'd come unto Him in all deep sincerity of heart and genuine repentance of sin and crying out of a heart of faith, "Lord; give me the water of life."

Step into that ritualistic place where men dress themselves in gaudy robes of religion and flaunt themselves like peacocks in the presence of God, all dressed out in the robes of religion and the finery of religion and say to them; "*If you knew the gift of God*" you'd take off those gaudy robes of religion and clothe yourself in sackcloth and ashes and come before God with a broken spirit and a broken heart and sue for peace and cry for mercy and ask for grace.

"*If you knew,*" if you knew the living God, if you knew yourself, if you knew His holiness and knew your sins, if you knew His grace and knew your need; you'd quit flaunting around like a peacock in the presence of God and fall on your face in His presence in submission, "*If you knew.*"

Oh step into the average pulpit where the preacher is delivering his eloquent sermon of words that nobody understands, clichés that nobody believes and intellectualism into which no one can enter and say unto Him; "Oh if you knew the gift of God you'd lay aside all of these flowery orations and eloquent speeches and intellectualism and you'd feed these men and women, these poor, thirsty, souls, the water of life."

"You'd feed these hungry sinners with the bread of life; you would've taught language they could understand. You deal with subjects in which they're involved. You'd answer questions that are upon their hearts. Instead of trying to please men you'd try to please God, "*if you knew the gift of God*" and who it is that reigns and rules, unto whom this world has been given by an act of the Father."

Step into the sick room where a sinner full of doubt and full of fear faces a Christ-less eternity. Walk up beside that sick bed where that man or that woman is dying; the world has been his portion and now he leaves it. The world's been all that he's ever had. He's had a religion without life and now he leaves it.

Now he faces death and judgment and eternity and he has no hope. Say to him; "My sinner friend; if you knew the gift of God, you'd ask of Him and He'd give you living water." "*He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*"

Let me ask two questions. The first one is this, who and what is this gift of God? Our Lord Jesus Christ said to this woman, this religious woman, this traditional woman, this woman who worships she knew not what, this woman who didn't know God:

He said; "*If you knew the gift of God you'd ask.*" What is this gift of God? Who is this? Well first of all; now listen to this; let me give you six things that are mentioned in the Word of God as being the gift of God. This will help you if you'll listen.

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

First of all: Jesus Christ is the gift of God.

No doubt about that “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.*” Christ is the gift of God. In **2 Corinthians 9:15** Paul said, “*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.*”

The Father gave the Son to be our representative, to be our substitute. The Son gave His life on the cross to be our Redeemer. “*He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We’ve turned everyone to his own way. But the Lord hath laid on Christ the iniquity of us all.*” Christ is our substitute. God gave Him; God gave Him to be our substitute, to be our Saviour.

“If you knew this gift of God you’d ask Him to be your Saviour.” The law is not the Saviour. The church is not the Saviour. The sacraments and communions and ordinances; they’re not the Saviour.

The preacher’s not the Saviour. The priest is not the Saviour. Christ is the Saviour. God gave His Son to be our Saviour. He gave His Son to be our Redeemer. Christ obeyed the law for us that we might have a perfect righteousness and a perfect standing in the presence of God almighty.

He went to the cross as our substitute and there He bore our sins in His body and died that we might live. The sinless became sinful that the sinful might be sinless. “*He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*”

Salvation is not something you do for God; salvation is something God does for you, something God does for you legally, something God does for you inwardly. God justifies you by the death of His Son, reconciles you by the death of His Son, and imparts unto you a whole new nature.

“*Christ is the gift of God.*” If you knew that you’d ask Him to do something for you, if you knew that. He has the water of life. He is the source, the fountain of life; do you know that? Have you ever asked Him to save you, to do something for you?

Secondly: Eternal life is the gift of God.

What do we mean when we talk about eternal life? Well, we’re not just talking about the length of it. Everybody will live forever. People in hell will live forever. Eternal life is not talking about the length of it, nearly as much as the quality of it.

It’s spiritual life. It’s the life which Adam lost in the Garden of Eden. It’s the divine life. It’s the life of God. It’s the image and nature of God. When Adam was in the Garden he walked with God. When he ate the forbidden fruit he died. “*And death passed upon all men.*”

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

He was separated from God. He lost the nature of God. He lost the life of God. He retained fleshly life; *“That which is born of flesh is flesh.”* He retained natural life but; *“The natural mind is enmity against God. The natural man receiveth not the things of God.”*

There’s a natural life and there’s a spiritual life. And this spiritual life is the gift of God. Now listen to the Scripture in **Romans 6:23**; *“The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. You who were dead hath He quickened.”*

“Well I’ve never been dead preacher,” not physically, but you were dead spiritually. I was dead spiritually and God gave me a new life, a holy nature, a divine nature, the life of God which Adam lost in the Garden.

You who were dead hath He made alive. *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit and that’s the gift of God.”* That’s what it says, *“Eternal life is the gift of God.”*

All right, thirdly; now listen carefully; *“If you knew the gift of God and who it is that’s speaking to you, you’d ask Him and He’d give you this gift of God”* And this gift of God is Christ and it’s eternal life:

Thirdly: Repentance is the gift of God.

That’s right; repentance is the gift of God. No man is going to be saved except he repents. And no man is going to repent unless God gives him repentance, unless God leads him to repentance.

Listen to the Bible, listen to God’s Word, **Romans 2:4**: *“Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.”* Who leads a man to repentance, the goodness of God? God leads a man to repentance.

Listen to **Acts 11:18**; *“God hath also granted repentance to the Gentiles.”* Who gave them repentance? God did. Now listen to this Scripture in **2 Timothy 2:24**: *“The servant of God must not strive; (he must not argue).”*

You don’t accomplish anything by arguing. You don’t accomplish anything by beating people with a whip of the law; the heart has to be opened by the Spirit of God. God has to awaken. He has to draw His people.

“The servant of God must not strive; he must be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, patient.” Sometimes God deals a long time with some people, *“In meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves,”* they are their worst enemy; they’re going to hell if they can, they’re going to keep fighting God just like Saul of Tarsus did until God meets them and breaks them and arrests them and humbles them and brings them down and draws them to himself; listen now, *“Instructing those that oppose themselves if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”*

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

What's Paul saying here in **2 Timothy 2:24 and 25**? He's saying, "You preachers get out there and preach the Gospel. Another man comes along and preaches and be patient and gentle, long-suffering; it may be that God almighty will give repentance to those people who are listening to you preach; it may be. *"It's the gift of God."*

**"Lord; lead me to seek thee
And seeking thee to find thee
And finding thee to love thee
And loving thee to serve thee."**

If you knew this, if you knew that repentance was the gift of God what would you do? You'd ask Him for it wouldn't you?

Fourthly: All right; faith's the gift of God. *"Faith is the gift of God; every good gift and perfect gift cometh from God."* Faith is a good gift and it comes from God. In **Philippians 1:29** the Scripture says *"Unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but to suffer for His sake. It's given unto you to believe on Him."*

The Scripture says; *"No man cometh to me except my Father which sent me draw him."* And in **Ephesians 2:8-9**; *"For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it's the gift of God."*

The disciples prayed, *"Lord; you increase our faith."* The Roman Centurion said, *"Lord; I believe, help my unbelief."* Faith is the gift of God. Do you want faith? You'll have to go to Him who gives faith.

If you knew it, if you knew the gift of God, what would you do? Christ said to this woman: *"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that's talking to you you'd ask me and I'd give you living water."*

My friend; wisdom is the gift of God. James says; *"If any man lack wisdom (let him what, let him go to school, no) let him ask of God."* I'm talking about spiritual wisdom; *"Let him ask of God."*

The Holy Spirit is the gift of God, **Luke 11:13**; *"If you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"*

"Brother Mahan are you saying that this whole thing of salvation from beginning to end is of God?" That's exactly what I'm saying. I'm saying *"He's the author and finisher of our faith."*

I'm saying that, *"He's Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."* I'm saying that eternal life is the gift of God, that repentance is the gift of God, that faith is the gift of God, the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, and any man who is saved is going to say, *"Unto Him who loved me and*

IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD ASK

JOHN 4:10 • HENRY T. MAHAN

washed me from my sins in His own precious blood; to Him be all the glory,” not some of it, all of it.

“If you knew the gift of God you’d ask and I will give you the water of life.” The difficulties not with the Lord; it’s with you. He said, *“You will not come to me that you might have life. He’s plenteous in mercy!”*