

## ***Study Hints for Thinking Further***

***International Bible Lessons***

**John 4:7-15, 23-26, 28-30**

**Sunday, April 22, 2012**

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

### **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

#### **1. When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, what example did He give?**

Jesus showed that even though some in society might be prejudiced against others (because of their gender, race, or moral character) Christians can and should share the life-changing good news about Jesus with everyone. Jesus did come to save people from their sins so they would not perish, so they could believe in Him and receive the gift of eternal life, and this good news should be shared with all people. The woman was transformed by Jesus and the living water He gave her. Christians can prayerfully offer the life-giving truths about God the Father and Jesus the Messiah to all people, and some will come to believe and be transformed.

#### **2. Why do you think Jesus emphasized that what He had to give her was “the gift of God”?**

Jesus knew, and the woman knew, that her past way of living was not something that would merit anything Jesus or God the Father had to give. She could not afford financially to pay for anything from Jesus. He had something to give that she could not merit, pay for, or earn, and that gift was eternal life from God. When we receive eternal life from God, we also receive a gift that we have not and cannot earn by what we do. We can only express our deep appreciation and love for God in the way we worship and serve Him.

#### **3. What type of worshipers does God the Father seek?**

God wants believers to worship Him as “the Father,” not “a father.” He does not want us to worship Him by any names that He has not revealed in the Bible. It certainly seems that worshiping God as “the Father” means more to God than any other names He has revealed in the Bible; if not, Jesus would have told the woman something else and Jesus would have used other names for God than primarily using “the Father” to address God and teach about God. We must worship God in spirit (as the Holy Spirit unites with and communicates with and empowers our spirit), and in (in accordance with) the truth (the truth of Jesus, Who is the Truth, and the Bible).

**4. Why do you think Jesus revealed to her directly, instead of indirectly as He often did with some, that He was the Messiah?**

The woman at the well indicated openness to Jesus and to learning from Him. She professed her faith that the scriptures she had (the first five books of the Old Testament) were true, the true word of God (which they are). She professed her faith that Jesus was a prophet. She professed her faith that the Messiah was to come, and she professed some of the things she knew the Messiah would do when He came. Therefore, Jesus knew when she would not reject the truth and was ready to believe in Him as the Messiah. Jesus spoke indirectly to those who did not believe the basic truths that God had previously revealed in the Bible, who were predisposed to reject Him and what He had to say as Messiah and what He had to teach about God the Father.

**5. Why might the woman's testimony about Jesus and what He had done have influenced the townspeople to go out and meet Him? Why was her question more important to them than if she had simply declared that she had met the Messiah?**

The townspeople knew what kind of woman she was; they knew about her past and her former husbands, and who she was living with then. For a stranger at the town well to also know these facts (reveal these facts to her) and talk to her about her life would have been startling to them. Her experience would at least indicate that Jesus was a prophet. If she had told them outright that she believed He was the Messiah, they might have rejected her testimony because of the type of person they knew her to be, and this might have prejudiced them against Jesus when they spoke to Him. It seems the Holy Spirit moved within her so she would ask a question that would arouse their curiosity, so they would be influenced to find out the answer for themselves. Sometimes we can share the gospel with others simply by asking them the right questions about Jesus.

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