

# THE NITTY GRITTY

Text: John 4:25-42

## THE PLAIN TRUTH

Keeping the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ is like withholding \_\_\_\_\_ to a person dying of \_\_\_\_\_.

### Four Myths We Want to Examine:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ of Church and State
- 2) People don't want to hear about \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) Remain \_\_\_\_\_, for faith-sharing is divisive and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) Religion should be \_\_\_\_\_.

September 7, 2014

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Personal Study • September 7

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who always goes after the one lost sheep. Today's story is no exception. We see Jesus intentionally making His way from Judea to Galilee by taking a route Jews refused to travel, for it goes through Samaria. Samaria and the mix of people who made up its population were an ugly reminder of Israel's Assyrian captivity, brought on because Israel had repeatedly refused to turn from sin and idolatry (see 2 Kings 17). Fast-forward from the days of the kings to Jesus' day, and Jews still hated Samaritans and avoided traveling through their region. But the Lord doesn't. Jesus has business in the Samaritan village of Sychar—He has a lost sheep to rescue so that many more can be brought into the fold.

## Read John 4:4-42

Although Jesus is aware of social taboos, He never allows them to keep Him from His Father's work—seeking and saving lost people. While the disciples are away in the village to buy food, Jesus (a teacher, a Jewish Rabbi) speaks to a Samaritan. This person is not only a Samaritan (a half-breed hated by Jews) but a woman. And not only is this person a woman (with possibly a decent reputation) but a shamed woman who has had five husbands and now living with a man. As with you and I, the Lord knows it all and sees it all. Yet Jesus also sees beyond our past shame and sin, to our future as clean and redeemed children of God.

### 1. What especially moves you in this story?

How is Jesus' unrelenting engagement with this woman an example for us who want to reach people with the Gospel message—people who may at first want to put us off or change the subject?

### 2. What does the woman already "know" about the Messiah (see v25)?

Look closely at Jesus' response to the woman in v26 and quickly review each turn of the conversation from vv7-24. In the woman's understanding, Jesus has already fulfilled what she "knew" about Messiah—to come and explain everything. She leaves her water jar, runs back to the village, and tells everyone! What unfolds as the woman shares the Good News (see vv40-42)?

What an evangelist is this Samaritan woman! Although Jesus has referred to Himself as the "Son of Man" (John 1:51, 3:13) and called God His "Father" (2:16), it was to the woman at the well He first identifies Himself as *Messiah*. Jesus explains: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing His work... wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life" (see vv34-36). One lost sheep was rescued and an entire village comes to know Christ. Who is the Lord calling you to go after? Your courage to go after the one could cause an eternal ripple that only heaven will be able to measure.

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