

Outline of Fr. Patrick Winslow's Lecture on Lesson 5

A. Scriptural Context

1) Faith is a divine gift given by the Heavenly Father necessary for accepting the truth of who Jesus is. It was offered to

- a) The Jews (temple priests/elite and Nicodemus)
- b) The Samaritans/'half Jews' (Samaritan woman at the well)
- c) A non-Jew (the official).

- ✧ Note the irony.
- ✧ Note the expansion – the gift of Faith being offered to those outside of the Jewish faith.

i. Jesus moves in a deliberate order to offer the gift of Faith.

- ✧ Jerusalem with the Temple elite and Nicodemus (the Jews) - is rejected.
- ✧ Jacob's well and encounters a Samaritan woman - only successful after some persuasive dialog.
- ✧ To non-Jew in His encounter with the official - the official approaches Him and accepts readily with no rejection or any persuasive dialog.
 - The ones who should be open to the divine gift of Faith are not, while the one outside of the Old Testament covenant accepts the gift with no resistance → How human belief had corrupted the true belief of the Jews.

ii. Jesus later charges the Apostles to do in His name in Acts 1:8. The evangelical mission given to the Church - invite **all** to receive the divine gift of faith.

- ✧ The Apostles continue the salvific work of Christ on earth as they are led by the Holy Spirit to fulfill what Jesus begins here in John.
- ✧ Bishops are the successors to the Apostles, who in Word (Sacred Scripture and Teaching) and Deed (Sacraments), continue the saving work of Christ.

In each sacrament, their hands connect the faithful to the laying on of hands and invocation of the Holy Spirit which goes all the way back to the original twelve apostles and Jesus Christ Himself. Thus, Christ's hands reach through history and into every land.

B. Samaritan Woman

- 1) The Samaritans were regarded as “half-breeds and as traitors to the covenant of Moses.” See the Points to Ponder.
- 2) Ten tribes of Israel (Israel) break away, two tribes (Judah) remain in Jerusalem.
 - a) God raised up prophets who address this great schism. Together they should be faithful to God as one kingdom worshipping in the one Temple.
 - b) The ten tribes (Israel) are rebuked by the prophets for defecting and not being faithful as a bride should be to her groom - in spite of hardships.
 - c) However, the prophets note that someday they will be reunited with their bridegroom (the Lord).
- 3) The well.
 - a) A well is a place of thirst where one’s desire for life is quenched.
 - b) This is Jacob’s well. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel and then fathers the 12 Tribes. The well of Jacob (Israel) is therefore an image of Jesus who is the true well of life - the well promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel) and his descendents.
- 4) Note that as soon as this eternal water is offered, Jesus brings up the issue of her husband.
- 5) Bring all of the above together and we can see that Jesus is speaking to a situation beyond her series of marriages → He is addressing the whole of the Samaritan people whom she now represents.

Standing at Jacob’s/Israel’s well → a sense of returning to the true (original) faith of Israel.

- a) This abrupt, seemingly off topic request to get her husband compels us to probe deeper.
- b) The woman understands the various levels at which Our Lord is speaking. “You have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband.” He speaks also of all Samaritans. This is verified by her claim that Jesus must be a prophet.

Note: The Samaritans rejected the prophets while Judah accepted them. Israel didn’t want to hear that they shouldn’t have broken away and divided the kingdom. So “you are a prophet” = “you are THE PROPHET for Jews - the prophet of whom all prophets were a mere foreshadow.

- c) Also, she makes the connection and jumps to the topic of worship from the topic of husbands. “Our Father worshipped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where man ought to worship.’ (v 20) This is not merely an issue of geography. It is an issue of fidelity.
- d) Previous text of John’s Gospel - Jesus is the Eternal Word of God; the Eternal Son of the Father; the Messiah; and now the Prophet. Jesus’ words: “and he whom you now have is

not your Husband”, applies to Him - the Eternal Bridegroom of the bride He has set out to gather from all nations and purify.

- e) He is calling the Samaritans to return and reclaim the inheritance promised to their father Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). He is calling the Samaritans to become part of His bride - The Church.

C. Applying the previous lesson to this account of the Samaritan woman and the healing of the official’s son.

1) The contrast between the divine gift of Faith and human faith (belief):

- ◆ Human faith is proven to be insufficient
- ◆ An insurmountable problem when self-righteousness exists behind one’s human faith and refuses to submit oneself to God.
- a) The Samaritan woman and her fellow towns people, after a mere exchange, submit to God and receive the gift of Faith.
- b) The official a non-Jew approaches Jesus and submit to Faith before even a verbal exchange takes place.
- c) Notice the irony:
 - i. Jews do not submit to God and receive the gift of Faith after much dialog (Temple Elite / Nicodemus with the exception of Nathaniel);
 - ii. Samaritans submit to God and receive gift of Faith after some dialog; a non-Jew,
 - iii. non-Samaritan submits to God and receives the gift of Faith without any dialog at all.
 - The Jews who should be the first to accept Faith from above and in turn believe in Him are the least able to do so.
 - The first sign (in the Book of Signs) converts not the Jews or half-Jews, but the non-Jew official. The official did not need a sign beyond that of Cana.
 - Now, the signs that came from the gift of Faith received by outsiders (such as the official) will be used to convert many of the Jews.
- d) People of Judah (the Jews) and Israel are being rebuked. They failed to prepare the world for the messiah. They also have hardened their own hearts and no longer submit to God but only to themselves. This self-righteous approach to God leads only to mere human faith.