JOHN 4

Living Water for a Thirsty Town

a weary Savior at Jacob's well, a woman with a waterpot, and a father who took Jesus at His word

> *"but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."*
> JOHN 4:14

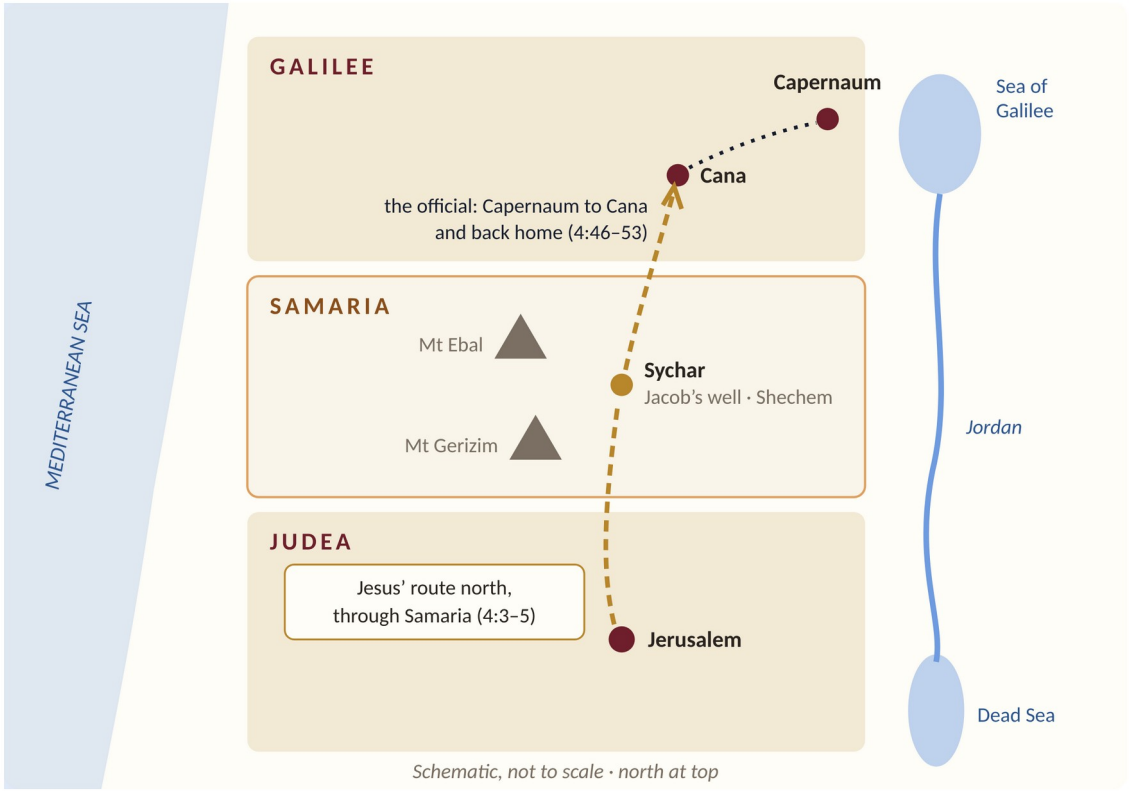
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 3 ended with Jesus and John the Baptist both baptizing in Judea and John's disciples complaining that "all are coming to Him" (3:26).

2. The hostility between Jews and Samaritans was centuries old.

3. Sychar lay near ancient Shechem, in the pass between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.



He Had to Pass Through Samaria

Opposition in Judea, a road north, and a tired Savior at Jacob's well

JOHN 4:6

and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

DAVID GUZIK

Purpose, not convenience — people there needed Him; noon by John's reckoning.

R.C. SPROUL

Three strikes against her; perhaps in a hurry; high noon, alone.

C.H. SPURGEON

Love held back His deity; He waits, in no hurry, for sinners.

MATTHEW HENRY

Avoid temptation unless you must; think on your Master's weariness.

ἔδει

EDEI · "HE HAD TO"

The imperfect of dei, the "must" of chapter 3 (vv. 7, 14, 30).

Living Water

"Give Me a drink" — and the gift that ends thirst forever

JOHN 4:10

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

DAVID GUZIK

If you knew more you would pray more; not a sip but a connection.

R.C. SPROUL

No shared cup; she should have dropped everything; we run from God.

C.H. SPURGEON

Be the emptiness, let Him be the fulness; no one ever refused.

MATTHEW HENRY

Ask earnestly; the fountain of life is hid with Christ.

ὕδωρ ζῶν

HYDŌR ZŌN · "LIVING WATER"

In ordinary speech "living water" was running water — a spring or stream rather than a cistern — and the woman hears it that way (v. 11).

In Spirit and Truth

Five husbands, two mountains, and the Messiah who reveals Himself

JOHN 4:23

"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

DAVID GUZIK

Win the soul, not the argument; worship by the whole counsel of God.

R.C. SPROUL

0 for 5; He answers the question — salvation is of the Jews.

MATTHEW HENRY

Reproofs work best when least provoking; God is an infinite mind.

προσκυνέω
PROSKYNEŌ · "WORSHIP"

To bow down, to prostrate oneself; the word may come from the picture of kissing toward someone, as a dog licks its master's hand.

Fields White for Harvest

A waterpot left behind, food the disciples did not know, and a town that believes

JOHN 4:35

"Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

DAVID GUZIK

A safe place to confess; the harvest is coming across the fields now.

R.C. SPROUL

She never filled the jar; His meat was the Father's will.

C.H. SPURGEON

She never dipped the jar, yet she gave Him drink — by believing.

MATTHEW HENRY

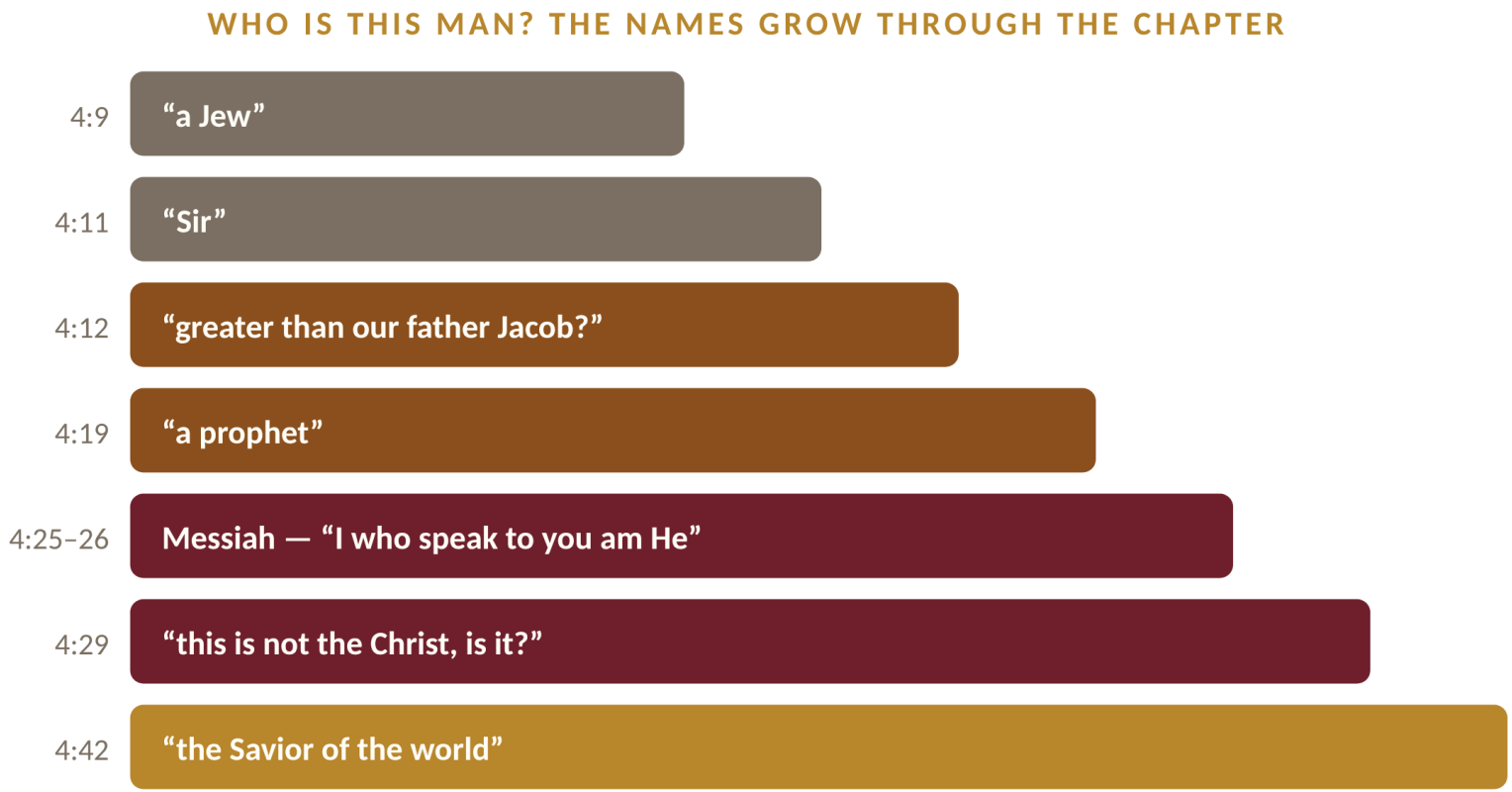
Gospel time is harvest time; one woman taught a town.

ὑδρία

HYDRIA · "WATERPOT"

A household water jar, from hydōr, water.

The names grow



The woman starts with what she can see; the town ends with what they have heard for themselves (v42).

Follow the bars down the page: each new name for Jesus says more than the last, from “a Jew” at the well to “the Savior of the world” in the town.

Go; Your Son Lives

A prophet without honor, a royal official, and faith in a bare word

JOHN 4:44

For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

DAVID GUZIK

Ran in fear, walked home in faith; faith takes Jesus at His word.

R.C. SPROUL

Not believing in God but believing God; that is saving faith.

C.H. SPURGEON

Spark, fire, flame, blaze — then the whole household.

MATTHEW HENRY

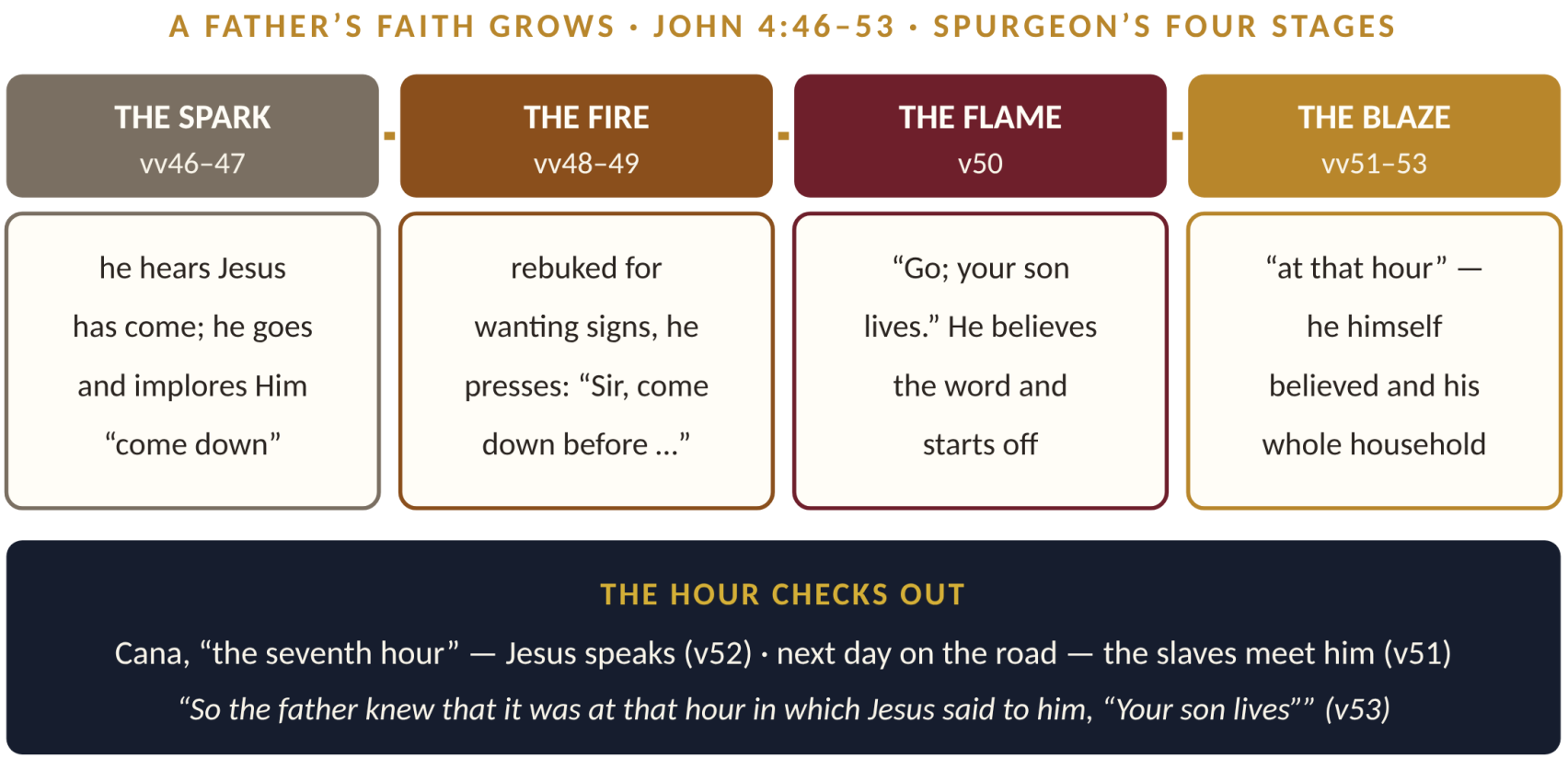
No sign seen, yet he believes the wonder done.

βασιλικός

BASILIKOS · "ROYAL OFFICIAL"

An adjective, "royal, belonging to a king," used here as a noun: a king's man.

A father's faith grows



Spurgeon traced four stages in the official's faith; read left to right, and notice that the healing word came before the man saw anything.

What to carry from this chapter

1

“Had to” is the same word as the cross.

Edei (4:4) is the past tense of the “must” of 3:7, 14, 30.

2

God was weary at a well.

Spurgeon: “Jesus never wrought a miracle merely for his own comfort.”

3

He asks before He gives.

“Give Me a drink” (v7) breaks three walls at once — Jew and Samaritan, man and woman, rabbi and outcast — and then turns into an offer: “you would have asked Him” (v10).

4

A spring, not a cistern.

Jacob’s well is a deep shaft; the water Christ gives is a pēgē that leaps up (hallomai) inside a man.

More to carry

5

Jesus exposes in order to heal.

Sproul: “She was 0 for 5.”

6

Not where, but whom and how.

She asked about a mountain; Jesus answered with a Father, a Spirit and the truth.

7

The first “I am” goes to an outcast.

“I who speak to you am He” (v26) is the first egō eimi Jesus speaks of Himself in John — not to the teacher of Israel but to a Samaritan woman.

8

She left her waterpot.

Sproul: “We have no record that she even filled it.”

Talk it through

1. Jesus “had to pass through Samaria” — the place good Jews avoided. Who is the person or place I avoid that Jesus might be sending me toward?

2. What “wells” have I kept going back to that leave me thirsty again — and what would it look like to ask Jesus for living water instead?

3. When Jesus put His finger on her past, the woman changed the subject. What subject do I raise when God gets close to my sin?

4. Is my worship “in spirit” (from the heart) and “in truth” (by God’s Word)? Which one am I weaker in?

5. The woman’s whole testimony was “He told me all the things that I have done.” What would my honest one-sentence testimony be?

CLOSING

John 4 starts with a tired man at a well and ends with a father on a road, both holding on to a word. Jesus crosses every wall to reach a thirsty woman, and then lets her town hear Him for themselves. If you are thirsty, ask Him; if you have drunk, leave your waterpot and tell someone where the water is.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.