Jesus Crosses Boundaries part 2

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Sermon Audio file

Jesus Crosses Boundaries (John 4:1–26)

Series: The Multicoloured Wisdom of God · Sermon outline and discussion guide

The Samaritan: barriers between groups (v. 9)

Main point: Jesus crossed the lines that others deliberately refused to cross.

The text: “Jews refused to have anything to do with Samaritans.” Jews would even travel the long way around Samaria to avoid contact.

The background:

Solomon’s son rejected the people’s plea to lighten the tax burden, and the kingdom split into north (Samaria) and south (Judah and Benjamin, capital Jerusalem). Assyria conquered the north, scattered its nobles, and resettled foreigners there, who brought their own gods and worship practices. Intermarriage led the Jews to view Samaritans as impure, and the rivalry lasted for generations. This is the source of the woman’s remark about worshiping on Mount Gerizim.

Personal story: Onyilo’s family objected to his marrying someone from a different Nigerian tribe. God asked him, “Do you want to go to heaven where that tribe will also be? If you can’t welcome her into your worthless house, how will you spend eternity with them in my priceless heaven?” He repented and went ahead with the wedding.

Key insight: Our openness is often tested only when someone enters our intimate circle (family, marriage). That is where we discover whether our hearts are truly open.

Galatians 5:19–20: Dividing people into groups is listed among the “works of the flesh.” It is human nature, not something peculiar to the Jews and Samaritans.

Application: Unconscious bias is real. Awareness plus the Holy Spirit’s help allows us to deal with it.

The Woman: Barriers of Status and Reputation

Main point: No one is too insignificant or too broken for Jesus to reach.

She came to the well at noon, alone, which was unusual, since women typically drew water together in the morning or evening. This suggests she was rejected by her community.

Despite her history (five husbands, and currently living with a man who is not her husband), Jesus chose her for the first public revelation of himself as Messiah.

Encouragement:

If you feel unimportant, unaccomplished, or are struggling with addiction, you are the kind of person Jesus seeks.

Endure and hold on. Jesus is willing to break every wall between you and himself.

III. The Well: Our Shared Humanity and Our Deeper Need

Main point: Everyone goes to the well, so we are fundamentally one.

Skin colour, accent, job, and family background do not define who we are. The life of God within us does.

Our resurrection bodies will have no tribe, colour, accent, or profession.

Everyone shares the same basic needs: food, friendship, love, and care.

IV. Jesus: The Eternal Source

Main point: Jesus offers himself as a source that never runs dry.

Temporary sources satisfy temporary needs, but only Jesus meets the eternal one.

Living water flows from within us (John 7:38), so joy, love, and kindness flow outward to others.

Our joy then depends on God rather than on money or circumstances.

Revelation 21–22: no need for sun or moon, because God himself is the light.

Closing Response

Self-examination (not guilt-tripping): Have I dealt with the barriers in my heart?

Prayer: Ask God to break down walls and open the guarded inner places so the Holy Spirit can flow through us to others.

Declaration: “Lord, I need you. Be my source.”

Five discussion questions

Where does the line fall in my heart? Is there a close circle (family, marriage, friendships) where I may be guarding a boundary? Why is it easier to be welcoming at church than at home?

How does unconscious bias show up? Galatians 5:20 names dividing people as a work of the flesh. Where do we see this in assumptions, jokes or who we sit with, and what can we do about it?

Whom would Jesus cross a boundary to reach here? Who in our neighbourhood, workplace or church feels excluded? What one step could you take this week?

Do I believe Jesus wants to reveal himself to me? Where do I feel unworthy or overlooked, and how

does the woman’s story change that? How can we encourage one another?

What wells do I keep returning to? (money, approval, relationships, achievement) What would it look like for my joy to depend on God, so love and kindness flow out to others?