

City Life August 8th

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INTRODUCTION

Protagonists Anonymous

Their presence in Scripture might be minor... but their stories shine out Major Truths and Major principles that can have a Major impact on us if we will take the time to look... and we are!

Tonight... a woman whose story is actually a little more well known than some that we have seen in this series, but the Bible still really only gives us a few details about her personally

Many of us know her as **The Woman At The Well...** because the Bible doesn't even reveal her name...

BIBLE FOCUS

John chapter 4 details

READ verse 7

READ verse 10

Read verse 13-14

The conversation turns... from talking about getting water from a well... to the living water of Life that only Jesus can provide for the thirsty places in our lives...

Jesus put His finger on the most parched place of all in her life... He reveals how thirsty she is when He brings up the brokenness of her relationships and her poor choices,

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF AS THE MESSIAH to this broken and hurting woman...

READ verse 28- 29a

READ verse 39

PHOTINI

This story left me wanting more... a friend told me some things that blew my mind about this **Woman at the Well...** her name is **Photini**.

Lots of questions...

Share with you what I found out because these details really bring a MAJOR TRUTH front and center for all of us to see about this MINOR character

DETAILS first from the ancient writings... then we will ponder the TRUTH her story proclaims

The distinction of Scripture over other writings...

- a clear distinction between God's Word and books.
- God holds his Word High – we should too
- Bible Declaration ... *"This is my Bible... I believe what it says about God and I believe what it says about me. I give my time, attention and affection to this Word because I believe it is the living active Word of God that has the power to renew my mind, transform my life and set me free to life and blessing. This is my Bible and I believe God will speak to me through it!"*

Not suggesting in any way we are going to set what we find about Photini in these writings in the same place as Scripture, there is a vast distinction... BUT we can learn from historical writings that are well respected by Bible Scholars.

Links to her story

<http://www.orthodoxchristian.info/pages/photini.htm>

<http://ww1.antiochian.org/st-photini-samaritan-woman>

Jesus faithfully crossed the cultural lines to come to meet with her at a well... He sought her out and offered her the Living Water of Life... And on that day she opened up her life and said "You are the Messiah ... the Only One... He enlightened her soul and filled her with Living Water that continued to spring up in her even in when this world continued to drain her dry!

The details of leave us with so much to consider... not just about her... but about ourselves!

In the book of Revelation, the Bible says that the combination of

~ The blood of Christ + a Real Life story of someone who has trusted in the blood of Jesus for salvation ... can move us forward to OVERCOME as well!

Photini obviously believed in the blood Jesus

And her life story is a powerful testimony of what she did with that belief!

What we learn about FULLNESS from her story

Understanding our brokenness and our emptiness

- When sin entered the world it caused the death of our spirit... we became **BROKEN**
- Broken with a gaping hole on the inside of us, we became **EMPTY**... longing to be filled because we were never created to live empty of the Spirit of God inside of us.

[Learn more from Scripture about our brokenness and emptiness](#)

The emptiness inside of us leads us throughout our lives to stop at this well and this well and this well... hoping and wishing and striving to find fullness. Because we can't stand the ACHE of emptiness.... because we were never created to live with it in the first place.

"There's a Hole in My Bucket"

Oh how that song speaks right? It is so telling about our the condition we all have experienced

- We all have a life with a hole in it... all of our lives have been broken by sin
- And because of that brokenness we are all marked by emptiness...
- We ask and we reach out and we say, "Help me fix this!" ... but we end up going round and round in circles, ultimately ending up in the same place where we started...

But here is the 2 fold Truth of FULLNESS which is so prominent in Photini's story...

- That hole can only be fixed by Jesus... He saves us from ourselves...
- He wants to fill us up with His living water that never runs dry!

Her encounter with Jesus changed absolutely everything for her... and marked her as a FULL woman til the very day she died in an empty well!

IT MARKED HER IDENTITY

When Jesus met her and He showed up in the heat of her day... and she chose to believe in Him... it changed how she saw herself... her identity!

The encounter she had with Jesus changed how she saw herself and we see that play out in the way she interacted with others...

- **In the community** – she ran right into it and shared confidently about Jesus with the men... men who more than likely had absolutely no respect for her... and in the past that knowing drained her dry... but not now... she went confidently and told them of what she had encountered in Jesus
- **In the company of the disciples** – they went from questioning Jesus, “Why are you talking to her?” to baptizing her on the day of Pentecost and giving her a new name, “Enlightened One”
- **In her family** – her sisters... her sons... became believers as she shared with them... how many of us know... it is within our family that we struggle the most to change how we see ourselves... she did it!
- **As we continue to read of her story...** we find this new identity of being a filled woman through Jesus marked her relationships... even her enemies... she shared confidently, bodily, FULLY... because she was full! Her heart was wide open with confidence in WHO she was in Christ! And that never drained out of her, because there was a continual supply!

MOST whom she shared with gave their lives to Jesus too... not everyone... but many did...

Her life was marked by the fruits of Christ that draw others to Him... the love, the joy, the peace, the kindness and compassion...

Her identity changed from EMPTINESS to FULLNESS and it spilled out on so many who also drank of this fullness

WHAT ABOUT US?

Photini’s testimony of a filled up identity can speak to all of us...

Ask ourselves...

- Has my encounter with Jesus marked me with fullness?
- Or am I still walking around empty, carrying my bucket asking someone or something to fill it?

Many of us who have had an encounter with Jesus... are still walking around empty...

The hole in our bucket is fixed... but we are still holding out our bucket to this world...

READ John 4:28 - Photini left her waterpot ... prophetic image for us to ponder...

- Are we still carrying our bucket holding it out to this world?
- Or are we living from a place of fullness in Christ that never runs dry!

Even if your bucket doesn’t have a hole in it anymore... in other words you have received salvation in Christ... if you are still looking to this world for fullness... realize that any fullness you find is bound by limitations... a bucket can only carry so much and then you have to start all over again... you will be going round and round in circles

Many believers get stuck...

- We receive salvation from Jesus...
- But we still are trying to fill ourselves with this world

But What Jesus gives is continual... flowing... no limitations.... never runs dry fullness!

And when we operate from His fullness, it then gets spilled out on everyone around us...

I would encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to help you look in the mirror and ask yourself... am I operating from fullness or emptiness?

Am I relating to

- My community
- My family and friends
- My church
- My enemies

- My life circumstances – past present and future

FROM A PLACE OF EMPTINESS OR FULLNESS?

No one can answer that question honestly but ourselves. (Psalm 51:6 - ***You desire Truth in my inmost being***)

And when it does... it causes us to ask

- Has my identity been marked with a knowing of worth and value and the love of Jesus so deeply that I no longer carry around a bucket looking for people's approval... for this life circumstance to be this way or that way?
- Has my identity been so marked by Christ that I know that my life has become a well itself... a well full of something to give, to spill out and share

MY STORY

The first time I looked in the mirror and asked myself that question in light of Photini's story... it was hard to accept what I saw....

I have become obsessed with this Truth... God wants to mark our identities with the fullness of Christ...

Prayer/Vision story...

Father God said to me, *"It is yours, you can turn it on whenever you want..."*

I discovered I had access to all that flowed from His throne... at any time... as His child... whenever I wanted... I could turn it on and be full. I would never be in lack... unless I chose to be...

I think the Lord wanted me to know that I have always had access to His fullness, but for so many years I walked around living as if I didn't!

It wasn't that I never came to the well of living water... and let Jesus fill my bucket... I just never realized there was a faucet of living water on the inside of me that could ALWAYS be flowing...

The last three years that Lord has continually brought me back to that moment... and reminded me of that gift... showing me that faucet as I deal with stuff from my past present and future that wants to drain me dry...

The Lord will meet us in our emptiest of times... just like for Photini...

I am on a mission... I want to be a woman who SPILLS OUT on the world...

I don't want to approach the world with emptiness... why would I when I have access to fullness!!!

We all have access!

And His plan for us in Christ is that is how we would live... everyday... every moment...

Each of us have to look in the mirror and ask... am I empty or am I full! And we have to know That fullness can only be found in Jesus! We have a faucet... we can turn it on whenever we want!

- God's Word proclaims it...
- And there are lives of people like Photini that declare it...
- Does yours?
- Does mine?

"Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life!" ~John 4:13-14