

**Drink Living Water so that you can share Living Water**

<sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour (noon). <sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, **"Will you give me a drink?"** <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, **"You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?"** (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, **"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."** <sup>11</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?" <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" <sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, **"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."** <sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." <sup>16</sup> He told her, **"Go, call your husband and come back."** <sup>17</sup> "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, **"You are right when you say you have no husband. <sup>18</sup> The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."** <sup>19</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." <sup>21</sup> Jesus declared, **"Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."** <sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." <sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, **"I who speak to you am he."**

How many of you have a friend, a coworker, a family member, an acquaintance who is an unbeliever; in other words, they do not believe that Jesus is their Savior from sin? This would also include that individual who says they believe in God, but do not have a firm understanding of who God is and what he did to save humankind from sin. This would also include those friends who say they believe in God but their lifestyle demonstrates they do not know what it is that God wants of us. How many times have you personally tried to lovingly talk to them about their unbelief or their lifestyle but they refused to listen? Usually their response is they laugh at you, ignore you, call you a "Bible thumper" or excuse it by saying, "Nobody's perfect." Even when you try to tell them about Jesus and what he's done for them they still won't listen. Why is that? Why

don't others take God's Word as seriously as you and I do? The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14 writes, "**The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.**" In other words, if the Holy Spirit has not changed the heart they are not going to get it. If the unbeliever does not see a need for forgiveness through faith in Christ, they will not see why they should change their sinful living. So how do you get through to a soul which is not possessed by Christ? Watch how Jesus turns the unbelieving Samaritan woman around to faith.

This morning, in the gospel, John tells us a story about Jesus and a Samaritan woman. We actually need to look at the preceding verse to get the full affect of this story. In John 4:4 the gospel writer informs us, "**Now [Jesus] had to go through Samaria.**" Jews did not have to go through the territory of Samaria. In fact, they despised walking the road from Jerusalem north to Galilee. Some Jews even went out of their way to cross the Jordan and traveled on the east side of the river to avoid Samaria. Jews and Samaritans had a bitter rivalry, kind of like the Hatfield and McCoy families on the West Virginia and Kentucky border in the late 1800s. They hated each other. This is one of the reasons: in 722BC the Assyrian army conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. Later, they sent Assyrians into the land to intermarry with the Jews living there. The children that they produced were half Jew, half Assyrian: Samaritans. The Jews considered the Samaritans half-breeds because they were not full blooded Hebrews. But when John tells us that Jesus had to go through Samaria despite the bitterness, we see the necessity of his mission.

Jesus and his disciples were traveling from Jerusalem north to Galilee. They stopped at the town of Sychar. John shows us the human nature of our Lord when he explains that Jesus was tired from their travels and had to sit down on the edge of a well outside of the town. While the disciples went into the city to buy food a Samaritan woman came out of the city to draw water from the well. Notice that Jesus initiated the conversation, "**Will you give me a drink?**" The racial hostility between Jews and Samaritans came out through the woman's answer, "**You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?**"

Listen how Jesus turned an everyday conversation on a topic as ordinary as talking about the weather, and steered it toward a spiritual truth. As long as we're talking about water... "**If you knew the gift of God,**" if you understand that salvation is through Christ alone, "**and who it is that asks you for a drink,**" if you knew that I am he," "**you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.**" He peaked her interest about this living water idea. But her answer showed she did not understand that he was talking about spiritual things. To her living water was what flowed from the spring at the bottom of the well.

Since she still did not understand, Jesus explained in plain, simple language. "**Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.**" You know that if you drink water you will eventually get thirsty again, even if you chug gallons of the thirst-quencher Gatorade. The human body needs

water to survive. But Jesus was also talking about the necessity of spiritual water. The problem with human beings is that they try to find satisfaction by drinking the water of this sinful world with its sinful pleasures. But they always end up unfulfilled. This woman was a great example. She was spiritually thirsty, but she kept filling up with the wrong water; a promiscuous life, and that left her spiritually parched. The true living water Jesus offered would never leave anyone thirsty. It wasn't found in Jacob's well. Jesus was that true living water.

He continued, **“Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”** If only she would drink up this good news: by this man's life and death she would have eternal life! But she wouldn't. This woman was an unbeliever. Her failure to comprehend underscores the total depravity of the sinful human mind. It is impossible for anyone, by nature, to comprehend a free gift from God. The woman was still thinking about the water in the well. She didn't see a need for the waters of forgiveness and eternal life. So Jesus went to the law. He showed her why she needed the water of life. By preaching the law he created a longing for that true living water he had to offer.

Notice how the Teacher preached the law. He did not come out and say, “You're an adulterous woman! You're going to hell!” Jesus allowed the woman to reveal her own shamefulness. He was not harsh, but very gentle. He touched a sore spot in her life, a spot where she had to admit that she had not lived up the Law of God, a spot on which the Law of God and her own conscience would condemn her. **“Go, call your husband and come back.”** Not doubt embarrassed she replied with a lie, **“I don't have a husband.”** Now Jesus drives the nail of the law into her heart, **“You're right. You have had five husbands and you're shaking up with a guy and you're not married to him.”**

Jesus had preached sin and grace to this woman; her own sin as an adulterous woman and the grace of God that he offered. It was not until he allowed the Law of God to point out her need for a Savior. Then, when she recognized and acknowledged her sin, he showed this woman her Savior, **“I who speak to you am he.”**

Jesus dealt with you and me in the same way. From birth we were like the Samaritan woman. Born into this world as unbelievers, spiritually ignorant, completely and utterly deprived of any good, we did not even have the slightest desire for forgiveness. Your parents understood this. They knew and believed from Scripture that Jesus is the water of life, the only water that could bring life to your dead heart. This is why they brought you to church and allowed your pastor to pour the waters of baptism on your little head. Through this water and the Word Jesus brought you from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Because you have the water of life in you, Jesus Christ himself, he promises you, **“Indeed, the water I give will become in you a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”** Remember the opening song from the television show *The Beverly Hillbillies*? Old Jed Clampett was out hunting for some food, shoots at a critter, misses and up from the ground comes bubbling crude, oil that is, black gold, Texas Tea, and makes the

Clampett family millionaires. How much greater is that spring of water that bubbles up inside of you, overflowing with the riches of eternal life! The water of life bubbles up blessings, a new life and new benefits from the Lord. Through your baptism Jesus flooded your dry, parched soul with the living water of his life, death and resurrection. Through this washing Jesus drowned your sins in his blood. Through baptism Jesus gave you a new life to live here on earth and an eternal life waiting for you in heaven.

Jesus promised you that **whoever drinks this living water will never go thirsty**. This does not mean that you, as a believer will never feel unsatisfied, or that no thirst will ever be found in your heart again, or that he will at all times feel satisfied. The Christian heart cries out daily, **“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God!”** (Psalm 42) As sinful human beings we will, at times, like the Samaritan woman, try to drink things that cannot satisfy. We only end up dehydrating our souls. Through his law Jesus points out our sins. He shows us that we need the water of life. When you are feeling unfulfilled, you do not need to go anywhere else to find comfort or strength. Drink from the water of life.

Through his Means of Grace, the gospel in Word and Sacrament, Jesus comes to you and offers you living water for your parched soul. When you remember your baptism, you are filled up with the assurance that Christ has washed away all your sins. When he offers you his body and blood to eat and to drink, you taste a preview of heaven. Drink from the living water of God’s Word and Sacraments and be satisfied, at peace and filled with joy!

Just as Jesus dealt with you and me, and the Samaritan woman, you too will confront others who try to drink the unsatisfying waters of this sinful world that leave their hearts empty. We cannot come out and say to them, “You’re going to hell if you don’t believe, if you don’t change!” Just as Jesus started out with casual conversation, you too, can steer an ordinary discussion to the water of life. Let’s say that in the course of conversation with a friend you talk about family. You can say something like, “It’s nice that you have that kind of relationship with your family. You know, you and I have been friends for a while now, and I want to ask you, how is your relationship with God?” They may answer, “Good, I guess,” or, “I’ve never thought about it before.” You can then ask, “Do you feel your relationship is at a point that you confidently know where you will spend eternity?” Then you can talk to them about how to get there. Share with them God’s demand for holiness in our living and how we don’t meet his standard. In the end if they still don’t think they’re all that bad, God’s law strikes all hearts when he says, **“There is no one who does good (Psalm 14:3). All have fallen short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23).”** There’s no room to wiggle free from God’s law. There are no excuses for any kind of sinful living. It’s this law that convicts the heart, moves the sinner to acknowledge their sinfulness. It is then that you give them living water to drink. Show them their Savior and what he did for them. Let the water of his Word satisfy their longing soul.

My dear friends, daily drink from the water of life, and share that water with others. May the Holy Spirit give us strength and courage to do that this week. Amen.