

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Water is a very special commodity in life...water is life giving ...and it is a resource some may take for granted.

Most of us can go right to our faucets and turn the water on... and we don't have to walk any given distance to get it.

Many of us take water bottles with us on our journey throughout the day.

We now have these water bottles we carry with us that we can put fun stickers on and refill throughout the day...

In biblical times they would have had animal skins they would have carried with them to refill along their journey.

Most people who traveled also would have known about where the wells would have been so they may water their livestock... and replenish their animal skins.

Today our story takes place at Jacob's well... it would have been a well-known source of water.

This well is part of Israel's history....

Jesus' stop at Jacobs well is no coincident...Jesus is going to change lives in this moment.

I recently saw a Facebook meme... It said... "It wasn't the water he came for.... it was me." ... signed... The woman at the well.

This was all part of God's plan...

A Jew would not have traveled through Samariathey wouldn't have wanted to risk coming into contact with the Samaritans.

They would have crossed over at the Jordan River... and probably went up the other side to Galilee.

But Jesus being Jesus... goes against what would have normally been done.

Jesus doesn't avoid Samaria.... And he doesn't hurry through.

Jesus has a purpose for his mission....

Even though Samaritans were considered unclean...Jesus is going to use them for his ministry... and in this case... particularly a Samaritan woman...

Not only a woman.... but a woman who has been excluded... and perhaps even shunned because of her past.

Hence the reason she arrives at the well at midday.... As not to be seen by others... maybe it's just a little easier for her to come when no one else is around.

Most people would have traveled to the well early morning and in the evening.

So...Jesus sends his disciples off for food...leaving himself alone and opening himself up to have a conversation with this woman...

This conversation that Jesus has with the woman at the well... is one of the longest recorded conversations in biblical historyeven longer than any conversation he had with his disciples.¹

This tells us how important she is in the ministry of Jesus.

This woman would not have been looking for Jesus.... but Jesus was looking for her.

Jesus has been traveling.... perhaps a little worn out... and thirsty....which leaves Jesus open to ask the woman for a drink...

Here we have Jesus being a Jew asking a Samaritan for a drink.... She knows that if she gives Jesus anything to drink.... and they share anything in common as the water jar... it would have made Jesus unclean.

This poor woman doesn't know what is happening...

But Jesus reassures her... He will give her the gift of living water....

Jesus is breaking down the barrier....

Jesus is not judging her... he is offering her a new life.

The woman realizes that Jesus must be a prophet because he knows her past... and Jesus reassures her.

¹ Karoline Lewis, Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries on John

Jesus is not condemning her morals....but takes this opportunity at the well to talk about the knowledge that she lacks.

Jesus shares with her the gifts that only God can provide.

He tells of the time when the worship of God will no longer be just in a temple in Jerusalem...

The woman at the well is someone who we would least expect to recognize who Jesus is... but in Jesus' kindness.... the barriers were taken down... and this woman became an eyewitness to the good news.... then went out and proclaimed that good news.

One commentary spoke...when she left her water jugs behind ... she left her disgrace behind... she now enters into a life of abundance²...

Jesus has given her hope... purpose... and he has given her a new identity.

As a result of this meeting at the well... more Samaritans came to believe....

Through this woman's testimony... many came to believe...

Because of Jesus' kindness and empathy toward this woman.... many barriers were taken down... race... gender... and even religion...

Jesus sees her for who she is.... A beloved child of God.

Jesus didn't condemn her for her life... he points her to a new life... worshipping God...She went on... proclaiming.... "Come and see this man who told me everything I have done"... Jesus' love is inclusive.

Our faith comes from hearing the Word of God...the seeds are planted... and then they grow....Faith is about how we can grow and change...

I know we are Lutherans and Lutherans don't like change... but we change just like the woman at the well when our faith matures and deepens.

It doesn't mean we need to have all the answers... but to rest in our faith... Trusting in the promises of our Savior.

² Karoline Lewis, Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries on John

What would it look like if we went out proclaiming God's love with gratitude for what Christ has done for us like the woman at the well??

What would it look like for us to put our differences aside for those people who are different than us?

I ask...Who is your woman at the well?

Who do you judge because they aren't the same as you....or their lifestyle is different than yours...and who may sin a little differently than you...

How could you reach out and be kind... and accepting to them?

We need to remember not to draw lines between us... and the people who are not like us...

We need to be nice to the people who differ from us...the same God that made you ...made them.

Perhaps there are times in life when we may feel like this woman at the well... a little too broken...

But at the heart of this gospel today we hear that Jesus can satisfy our thirst...

Jesus points us to worship God... a God that is not confined to a temple... but a God who lives amongst us... and dwells within us...

A God of hope... God's love does not have boundaries... Jesus shows us God's love is for the whole world.

Jesus rescued the Samaritan woman... he called her past out to help her understand to leave her past behind.... and open a new future... and God is calling us to do the same.

The woman went and shared the love of Jesus.... and we are called to do the same....

We are called to care for others and especially the people who are less fortunate than us.

We are to nurture people... and their faith... We are to go out proclaiming that Jesus loves us so richly.... and deeply... that he searches out for us... and meets us at our well.

Christ died on the cross for us all.... Christ died to save us from all our sins.

Christ gives us the life-giving water of God's mercy.... Forgiveness... and grace.

Even at our worst.... Lowest... and most embarrassing moments..... God is present.

God loves us.... God sent God's one and only Son.... not to condemn the world
...but in order that the world may be saved through him.

Amen