

Sermon 2: John 4:1-28, 39-42

¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ **“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”** ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³⁹ **Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.”** ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers. ⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

Subject: How does Jesus lead us to eternal life?

Compliment: By meeting us where we are and loving us no matter where we are.

Main Idea: Jesus not only gives us eternal life, but He is also after our hearts and our lives in this moment.

Intro:

We all probably heard this phrase, “honesty is the best policy” – we are taught that when we are little by our parents, by our teachers, and just in society – honesty is a highly regarded value. However there’s something ironic about society that raises honesty as important but also makes people want to hide what they are truly thinking or feeling – and that is shame. There are expectations, standards, and norms, which if you don’t meet, you are shamed – like you should be like this and do this, but you’re not. If you ever felt this way – ashamed, unworthy – even from yourself, not only did others shame you, but you felt ashamed yourself for not fitting in, or not being adequate, you are not alone. There is a woman in the bible who had shame in all the areas of her life, but Jesus sees her and does everything he does to show that **he is after her heart and her life**. So if you would turn with me to John 4 to the story of a Samaritan woman, it is a long passage so I won’t read the whole thing, but I will highlight specific verses as I go to focus on.

Body:

The story of the woman at the well is one of the most iconic encounters in the Bible. This is the longest recorded conversation anyone ever had with Jesus. It is longer than any recorded conversation with any of his disciples.

In the start of John 4 Jesus is traveling through Samaria on the way to Galilee. Around noon, while His disciples were in town buying food, Jesus sits at a well when a Samaritan woman came along to draw some water. It wasn't the normal time. From understanding cultural and historical traditions of that time, women typically drew water in groups in the morning, and it was often a social occasion. The fact that she was drawing water alone, at midday, probably indicates she was a social outcast.

The Samaritans would be labeled as unclean by Jewish people. And, the Samaritan woman would also be labeled as an unclean sinner by the Samaritans themselves, as it is later revealed that she has had 5 husbands. So, she was an outcast within the outcasts. Rejected by the Jewish people; rejected by her own people; apparently even rejected by her five husbands, just imagine how much shame this would bring on herself. She was considered culturally unclean and carried much much shame around with her every day of her life. Perhaps that is why she came to the water well—*alone*—in the middle of the day.

And so, to her surprise, Jesus asked for a drink, the woman asked, how Jesus could ask this of her, (REACTION FILLED WITH SHAME) as she was a Samaritan and a woman and Jesus was clearly a Jew. He replied, "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" (v. 10).

He offers this shame-filled, sinful, Samaritan woman "living water" saying that whoever drinks from this water will have eternal life.

Living water was used to refer to water that moves, such as water found in a river. It was preferred for ritual cleansing. In other words, Jesus offers this Samaritan woman the opportunity to become clean. Can you imagine? This woman, who daily lived with the stigma of rejection, of unclean, of shame... has her life drastically changed by the one who came and carried our shame to the cross.

SO Jesus is not only concerned about her eternal life, but is also after her current life and her heart, to lift the uncleanness and shame to fill with his love.

This account of the Samaritan woman is well known to be the first evangelism that takes place in the Bible. But when the woman goes out to the town people what is her evangelism catch phrase?

"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did." REPEAT.

She just had a conversation with Jesus about living water that will give her eternal life, and worshipping in God in Spirit and in truth. Jesus tells that he is the Messiah that she's been waiting for and she could have said anything to tell other about him. She could have said "there's Come see a man who says he's the messiah. Come see a man who gives eternal life." but she chooses to say "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did." Why does she do this? she says this

because, she has so much shame in her life, and Jesus knew her life even before she told him, and HE STILL LOVED HER.

When the woman believed, she immediately ran off to tell others. Her words made an impact. As Scripture tells us, “Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony” (v. 39). The story of the woman at the well is a rich example of love, truth, redemption, and acceptance. And best of all, not only does Jesus accept her, but He accepts us, too. He wants us all in His holy kingdom — if only we, too, believe.

She was transformed from a fearful, unclean, shame-filled “sinner” to a welcomed, forgiven, and *loved* child of the King. The good news is that our Lord loves to rescue those who feel the *shame* of being a sinner and gives them praise and *honor* in his glorious presence. He allows us to start anew with a clean slate.

Conclusion:

I took Initiation in Spiritual Formation with Dr. Reimer and pre-covid we were able to do a 24-hour overnight retreat with all the students taking the course in that semester, I don’t know how we do it now. But during the retreat on the second night prayer and worship time, I just felt like I really finally had to come out with all my baggage of sin that I never revealed to anybody, because of shame. So I went to the closest person who was designated to pray with the students, it was Jackie, and I just confessed things that I was hiding for years and years. And Jackie told me to do something, she told me to go back to my darkest memory and re-visualize what is going on. And I brought it up, very painfully. And she asked what is Jesus doing in that moment? And I could see Jesus behind me covering with his huge arms, saying “my clean, and perfect child, I am here.” CONT.