

Today's gospel is such a wonderful and tender picture of how much God loves you. The passage starts off giving a vivid description of Jesus' humanity. He has just been on a long journey, He's tired and just sitting beside the well. The disciples have left and Christ, the Word, is there alone next to water. This beautiful view of Christ being tired and resting at the well shows that God was incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Both God and man. The Word shows that He became human. This picture of His humanity before the woman shows up sets the tone for the rest of the passage. Jesus comes to earth, Jesus was made man for the sinner. He came down from heaven so that mankind would be saved. Here He is the Messiah, Emmanuel God with us sitting there at the well. Here Christ is around noon when this Samaritan woman comes to draw water from the well.

Here is some context. Women at that time usually drew water at the beginning of the day for the house, washing or cooking and it was more of a social event. The women normally came together drawing the water together and also having fellowship. This woman drawing water at midday implies that she is an outsider, someone who is shunned by others.

So this outsider woman, who is also a Samaritan, walks up to the well minding her own business when the Word addresses her. He says, "Give me a drink." Again, his request shows Christ's humanity by having thirst. Yet, His thirst is for the salvation of mankind and not just water. He thirsts to save this Samaritan woman, and He thirsts to save you. The Word engages with this sinner and in this passage Christ gives the gospel to the woman then the law and then the gospel again. In today's sermon, it is modeled after what Christ did with this woman. Christ gently handled this outcast woman with the utmost tenderness because of her value to Him.

This passage made me think about people that are lost. People in your life that do not have Christ and are in the dark. How would it go if you just called them a sinner? If you just said that they are going

to hell. It made me think of those people that put the signs up “You’re going to hell.” or “God is your enemy.” or signs of those sort. These people hold them up at concerts or other events and sometimes they are reading scripture and sometimes not. Are these people truly trying to care for the souls of others, or is it some other selfish reason? I don’t know. However, without the Light, without Christ, sinners do not know that they are sinning and through the light of the Word the sin is exposed and sinners see the need for repentance. This is what Christ does with this woman. He interacts with her. He speaks to her. Hear the dialogue again.

He says “Give me a drink.” and she replies “How is it that you , a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” Christ asks for water and instead of giving him water she asks why He a Jew is dealing not only with a woman, but also a Samaritan. This was not what people call socially acceptable. He responds, even though she has not given him water, with the fact that He would give her living water. This woman, an outcast, a foreigner, who denied Christ water was offered the living water by Jesus. He offered the living water with no merit to her. He has given this woman the gospel. He has given this woman hope.

This woman does not ridicule or laugh at what others might find absurd. She asks the question “Are you greater than our father Jacob.” Here she is asking if Jacob who was blessed by God and gave this well for life and prosperity on this planet if Jesus is someone better? Christ tells the woman that He has something that is better than this temporal life. He can give the water that takes away thirst forever. Not only will it take your thirst forever but create in you a wellspring that continually pours forth. How does this woman respond? She asks for this water. “Sir, give this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.” As you can see

she still does not understand the Word completely, but it definitely is working. Yet in order to receive this water repentance needs to happen. This is the law. Christ offering this living water to this woman aids the law to come in and break down in pride or self righteousness. Christ says to her "Go call your husband, and come here." Christ has given her the gospel, but in order for her to receive the grace Jesus offers she must repent and He does it so gently by giving her a chance to confess. He tells her to call her husband, which He knows she does not have to give her a chance to come clean and bring forth a confession.

Just like this woman from the well you cannot hide your sin from God. You cannot keep it secret. He knows you, he knows what you have done and left undone. He knows your thoughts, your words, and your deeds. He knows the sins you just can't seem to get rid of and He confronts you with them. Just like this woman, He called out the rich young man to sell all his possessions. He gets to the heart of what you have failed to do. He gets to the heart of how you have not kept His law. He gets to the heart of the fact that you are not perfect, you are not righteous, you are a sinner. Right now He confronts you with that very sin. You cannot hide it. Repent! Your salvation does not come from you, but from the cross of Christ who died so that your sin is forgiven.

What does this woman say to Christ, but confesses that she does not have a husband. She is confessing her sin. Christ helps her in this sensitive subject by helping her confess the rest. Just like the prodigal son who comes back the father runs out to him and embraces and kisses him. Christ accepts this meager confession and the woman realizes that Christ is from God. She understanding that she is sinful asks about worshiping on the mountain or Jerusalem to get her sins forgiven. He tells her an astonishing thing, that the mountain and the temple in Jerusalem are not where she should look for the forgiveness of sins. What is sweeter is that He includes her when He

says you worship the Father. She is being included as a child of God. Christ goes on to tell her that true worshippers worship the Father in both spirit and truth.

What does this mean? Let us back up. Where do sinners get their thirst quenched for good? Is this not in baptism? Is this where water and the Word interact with the sinner? Is this where the outcast becomes a child of the Father? What do you receive in baptism, but forgiveness of your sins and the Holy Spirit. This you know to be true from His Word. As children of God you have His Spirit and what are you getting here at this His divine service, but the truth His Word. Here you worship in spirit and truth. You love God, because He has first loved you. He sacrificed His life so that you lowly sinner that you are can be more than conquerors, that you can be called the bride of Christ being united in His death and resurrection. You no longer thirst for you have salvation, you have His forgiveness, you have a peace that surpasses all understanding, you have the promise that death and damnation no longer have a hold on you, but life and eternity with God are yours.

Christ ends His conversation with the woman with these words. "I who speak to you am he." This English translation is not greatest, but more appropriately says "I am he." Hopefully that phrase "I am" perks your ears up to know that Christ is letting this woman know that He is where forgiveness and salvation are found. He is the God that gives living water to the outcast and the sinner. He is the Rock that was struck so that the living water could be drunk by all nations. He is the one that knows your sin and became man suffered up unto death so that you would be forgiven. He is the door to which you pass to salvation. He has given you His Spirit and He has given you the truth.

Every Sunday Christ reminds you that you no longer thirst. He gives you Word and Sacrament to remind you that Christ fully man and fully God died and rose so that the sin you cling to that sin you cannot seem to get rid of is fully forgiven and fully forgotten by God.

Just like Christ with the woman at the well His service starts off with the invocation giving you Gospel. Knowing that you are baptized. He has given you the living water. Then the confession of sins the law comes crashing down on you showing you your sin knowing that you cannot save yourself, and the gospel following right after with the forgiveness of sins in the absolution by Christ. This all leads to worshiping in Spirit and truth through Word and Sacrament. It is a beautiful parallel. It is beautiful to know that Christ came to you sinner and gave you His Word so that you would be called out of darkness and into His marvelous light. The man who thirsted by the well, the man who wept, the man whose insides were moved when He saw the crowd gently comes to you and let's you know that He is the "I am" in which your sins have been separated from you as far as the east is from the west. Rejoice for Christ loves that Samaritan woman. Rejoice for Christ loves you!

SDG

John 4

5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." 11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." 13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." 19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

27 Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" 28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 29 "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" 30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.

39 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." 40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word. 42 They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."