

Peace Lutheran Church  
March 16-19, 2017

**Jesus Gives Living Water**  
**John 4:4-15**

This happens quite often. I need a few items from the store – loaf of bread...macaroni and cheese...and a pair of shoe laces. So I text myself that short list and off to the store I go. And by the time I've left the store, I have my bread and macaroni and cheese and shoe laces...and cart full of other supplies and groceries. I went for three items and I came home with so much more.

Water. That was the one thing on her list. Go to the community well and fetch some water. And she got a lot more than what she anticipated.

Sometimes in God's Word there are some verses that seem like throw-away, insignificant verses. Here's one: **Now he had to go through Samaria.** But it's not a throw-away verse.

There were different routes he could have taken. Today we plug destinations into our Google Maps and we usually get three different options. Jesus, even without Google Maps, had different options. So why did he have to go through Samaria? Because Jesus had a thirst. Yes, I know, he was thirsty and needed a drink at the well. No, a different kind of thirst. He had a strong desire to reach out to and rescue a soul in desperate need of saving.

He could have bypassed the region altogether. Most Jews did. But he didn't. And once there at the well, he could have drawn his own water and he sure could have ignored this Samaritan woman for a variety of reasons...

- Jews were not too fond of Samaritans – and visa versa.
- This woman was a social outcast – she was an adulteress who was openly living with someone who wasn't her husband and before that she had been married and divorced multiple times.

But Jesus doesn't bypass the region nor does he bypass this sinful woman. He had to be there...he had to speak to her...he had to get her to see the her string of meaningless relationships...he had to rescue her so she could have a meaningful relationship with God.

What compassion. That Jesus, who literally had the weight of the world on his shoulders, would take significant time out of his day to orchestrate a meeting with this sinful, sinful woman so he could give her something more than just water.

Step away from Samaria and take a look at your own life. Do you see how the Lord took great steps to reach out to you? Do you see how the Lord had a great thirst and desire to find you and rescue you? Let's be honest, he didn't have to.

- He could have ignored the whole situation way back when Adam and Eve made that great blunder. Do you remember the lesson we read a couple weeks ago. They sinned and then they tried to hide from God. God just could have kept on walking – let them hide...let them be lost. Instead he called out to them. He initiated a conversation with them. He rescued them.
- And even if he did decide to have a soft spot in his heart, he could have chosen to cover only a select few with his grace – maybe Adam and Eve and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and that's it. Instead, he was willing for that grace to be shared near and far.

- And so he sends his own Son. Even then, he could have kept it hush hush...no angel chorus at his birth...no gospel writer to record his death and burial and resurrection...let alone four gospel writers...let alone 39 Old Testament books that point ahead to Jesus and 27 New Testament books that tell us what Jesus has done...and then making sure those words are preserved not just for a few decades but throughout the centuries, making their way to so many languages and so many areas of the world, including ours.
- And then he has given you churches and Sunday schools and catechism classes and pastors and parents. The sign of the cross on your head and on your heart at your baptism. The adoption into his family. He had to. He had to be there for you. He had to rescue you so he could give you a meaningful relationship with him.

But here's a question: Why you and me? Isn't it shocking to see Jesus would drop everything and travel to a well so he could meet with a sinful woman...the one who made one poor choice after another...who was a social outcast? Isn't it equally as shocking to see Jesus reach out to us?

Is he unaware and uninformed? Has he not been watching us closely enough? Is it possible he just didn't notice how I fell short again this week. Could he not hear my grumbling? Did he not notice the way I put my needs and wants ahead of others? Does he not see all the mistakes and failures, all the sinful fingerprints we've left on everything we've touched...all the relationships we've botched and the feelings we've hurt and the struggles between good and evil we've lost? No, Jesus is not unaware or uninformed. He sees our need as clearly as he saw it in the Samaritan woman. He wants us to see our need too. He wants us to realize how spiritually speaking, we are parched and in desperate need of his rescue. And to that thirsty soul he offers a drink.

**Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.** *Never say never*, they say. I guess because *never* sometimes doesn't mean never. We use the word to make promises or predictions:

- I'm *never* again going to eat too much or drink too much.
  - And then we do.
- I'm *never* again going to fall into this or that particular sin.
  - And then we do.

Never might be a word that is used a lot, but it often means very little. Unless of course, Jesus uses the word never. In that case...it always means never. **"...whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst."**

The water Jesus gives truly satisfies the soul. You won't need to mix in any additives or supplements...

- Only Jesus can forgive sin...only Jesus can grab you by the hand and take you to his blood-soaked cross and say, *"I forgive you; I paid for all your sins personally."*
- Only Jesus can say *"Salvation is yours"* – not because you have earned it...not because you've done something special – *"because I've earned it."*

Jesus gives living water. They say water has no taste. But the water Jesus gives has a distinct flavor. It's bursting with compassion and forgiveness. Drink it in. You'll find an endless supply source in the Bible...in your baptism...and at the Lord's supper. Let that living water fill you. Let that living water, bursting with compassion and forgiveness also flow from you. Amen.