

JESUS, FRIEND OF SINNERS

John 4:1-18

On this Memorial Day Weekend let us remember a self-sacrificing act of mercy in the U.S. Civil War – the Angel of Marye’s Heights in Fredericksburg, VA.

Have you ever been really thirsty? We all need to realize only Jesus can quench our true thirst.

1.EVERYONE EVERYWHERE NEEDS JESUS – John 4:1-12

- Jesus is the Ideal Evangelist. Jesus “has to” go through Samaria because of this God-ordained encounter with the Samaritan woman – 3:7, 14, 30; Colossians 4:5. Jesus breaks down barriers by speaking with the Samaritan woman – cultural, religious, and gender. A Rabbi was not supposed to speak with a woman in public – “*It is forbidden to give a woman any greeting*”-verse 27. Jews had no “dealings” with Samaritans. Pious Jews rejected all Samaritans racially and religiously – Luke 9:52-56; John 8:48. The Samaritans were the descendants of the remnants of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, annexed by Assyria in 722 B.C., and repopulated with a mixed group of peoples. Some Jews even prayed “Lord, do not remember the Samaritans in the resurrection.” Jews considered Samaritans impure, and impure in their faith. Samaritans only accepted their own version of the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy) and they even built a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim around 400 B.C. which was destroyed by the Jews in 108 B.C.
- But no one is beyond the reach of Jesus. Contrast this woman with Nicodemus in John 3. She is the religious, moral, and social opposite of Nicodemus. He was a Jew, a scholar, a moral man with a name and position. She is nameless, immoral, with no reputation. But everyone needs new life in Jesus!
- Jesus uses an everyday subject – water – to establish rapport and use as a teachable moment. Notice Jesus was tired – verse 6. He was God in human flesh, but still as a human He experienced human weakness. In our weakness, we can still minister! Jesus uses this simple request to cross the gulf between this woman and Himself. He captures her interest by comparing what He offers to water. The Samaritan woman like almost all in this gospel takes Jesus physically and literally. She doesn’t get it. The well is over 100 feet deep and He has no bucket. Does he think He is greater than Jacob? Jacob was revered – verse 5; Genesis 33:19,20; 48:21,22. But now One greater than Jacob was here! She doesn’t know who Jesus is and the gift He is offering – verse 10. “*A man-made well is contrasted with a God-given spring.*” Jesus is offering a unique different kind of water – LIVING WATER. Living water will quench the thirsting of our souls and nothing else can!
- None of us naturally know the gift Jesus offers us. It is only through beginning to grasp who Jesus is and what He offers that we are led to trust Him. But many people like this Samaritan woman won’t come to us, we have to go to them. Like Jesus, we may have to cross cultural and religious barriers.

2.ONLY JESUS SATISFIES OUR SPIRITUAL THIRST – John 4:13-18

- Humans, since Adam, seek satisfaction in almost anything and everything, except God Himself. We seek our own happiness, pleasure, power, control, security, etc. apart from God. The essence of sin is we seek our own satisfaction, not God – Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 2:13. Don’t some

seek God? No – Romans 3:10-12. We seek the gifts, not the Giver. We want security, meaning, happiness, pleasure, etc. But as Jesus says: *“Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again.”* Whatever our thirst, we all have an *“ever-increasing craving for an ever-diminishing pleasure.”* – C.S. Lewis.

- The essence of sin is seeking satisfaction our own way and in things or a person other than God Himself. This woman tried to find satisfaction in relationships with men. She had five husbands already and now was cohabitating with her new boyfriend. Cohabitation was blatantly immoral. She *“was looking for love in all the wrong places. Looking for love in too many faces...”*- Johnny Lee. Jesus draws out and points out her sin. She was living *“in a relational desert.”* Until we recognize and acknowledge our sin we will never be saved. We must realize our need of a Savior before we desire and thirst for Him. We must turn unfilled from our sin to Him alone who satisfies our soul.
- Only Jesus is the Living Water that satisfies our soul – verse 14. Nothing or no one else will ever satisfy – Psalm 42:1. Jesus offers complete satisfaction – *“whoever drinks the water I give Him will never thirst (never thirst again for all eternity!)”* – John 4:14a. *“You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”*- Augustine, A.D. 400. The satisfaction Jesus gives is an overwhelming supply, welling up to eternal life- John 4:14b. Jesus is the Water of salvation – Isaiah 12:2,3; John 7:37-39. Even now we taste of Him. *“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”* – John Piper. Around His throne we will always be satisfied in Him – Revelation 7:17; 21: 5-7; 22:1.
- *“All my life long I had panted for a drink from some cool spring that I hoped would quench the burning of the thirst I felt within. Hallelujah! I have found Him, whom my soul so long has craved. Jesus satisfies my longings, By His blood I now am saved.”*

Concluding Applications:

- In what or whom are you seeking satisfaction? If it's not in Jesus, it will always leave you empty. Stop drinking from the wells of sin and come unto Jesus.
- Do you rejoice in Jesus who as the Friend of sinners sought you and brought you to Himself?
- How does the living water of Jesus satisfy you day by day? Is He being glorified in your life? *“We demonstrate the surpassing worth of Christ when we reject earthly, empty pleasures and embrace Him as our all-consuming desire. A Christian who doesn't seek satisfaction in money, vacation, leisure, healthy children, or a good job but seeks Jesus instead makes a statement about the value of Jesus. When we find our greatest satisfaction in Him, we bring Him the most glory.”* – Matt Carter, *Exalting Jesus in John*.
- Are you willing to pray for opportunities to speak of Jesus – even with those who seem hopeless or beyond our normal barriers? Are you willing to go over the wall for Jesus?