

READ from Genesis 3 / God calling out to Adam

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

PRAYER

Our text John 4:10–26 / We are going to look at a well-known and beloved text this morning / the story of Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman by Jacob's well.

We won't have time to break down all of the rich lessons in this passage / there are many / we are going to look specifically at SHAME, where it comes from, what its purpose is, and how Jesus deals with it.

I am going to summarize until we get to vs 15...

Jesus needed to go through Samaria for one particular reason—to meet the Samaritan woman at the well, because she needed him—to heal her brokenness

And because her city needed *her!* / As she will become the first missionary to the Samaritans—pointing them to Jesus, the prophet who knows all of her sins, yet invites sinners to come to Him! Because of her witness, Jesus would minister to the people in her town and raise up many believers there!

The text says that Jesus shows up at the 6th hour, which would be noon in the Jewish clock / not 6pm as some have suggested, thinking of the Roman time system / the description of the well shows us that it must be NOON

The well would have been a very busy location in the cool of the morning and evening, but no one would be out there drawing water in the heat of the day. There is no one at the well—just Jesus and the woman.

Vs 7 • Jesus asks her for a drink

Vs 9 • She is shocked that a Jewish man would be speaking to her, a Samaritan woman

Vs 10 • Jesus speaks of living water, to pique her interests / to move the conversation from physical water to spiritual life

Let me read vs 11 / there is a key idea here for us

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"

Let me read this again: *The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with..."*

Think about it: What was Jesus going to use to get a drink of water? He doesn't have a cup or a pot.

There is nothing to draw with—meaning, *there is no common bucket on a rope*. People bring their own vessels to the well to draw with.

Which means = He was asking to drink from HER WATER VESSEL—which we'll find out later is a

waterpot.

Remember: Jews couldn't eat with Gentiles or Samaritans, because sharing food, and touching implements like a cup or bucket, would make them unclean / yet, here is Jesus asking her to draw water for Him to DRINK and He is planning on putting His lips up to her own water pot.

We are going to see the kind of shame this woman is living in as we move on in the passage. Think about the message Jesus just sent to her, asking to drink from her water vessel...

Shame isolates. Shame tells you that you are dirty and worthless and hopelessly broken. Shame tells you that God doesn't like you very much.

But Jesus says: *Let me drink from your cup. I'm not repulsed by you. I love you desperately. Give me a taste of the nastiest side of your life, and I'll show you I'm not afraid of it. I can work with your mess. I just want YOU.*

Vs 12 • Jesus had told her He could give living water, and the woman is a bit flabbergasted by this. *Are you greater than Jacob?* she asks

Vs 13–14 • Jesus describes living water so that she begins to long for it—a *fountain of water springing up into everlasting life*

15 The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.”

Jesus has sparked her interest, and she bites. She wants to know more.

Now—it is unclear whether or not she really believes He can give her water that would make you never thirst again / Maybe she thinks He is just joking around / Maybe she is just playing along with His weird symbolic talk / IDK what's going on in her mind up to this point...

But I want to draw your attention to the little phrase at the very end of her response...

“Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, **NOR COME HERE TO DRAW.**”

I've never noticed this before! She doesn't like coming to the well to draw water!

I've always thought, “She doesn't like the hard work of drawing water” / but this isn't the right idea.

You see, in every community that has a common water source, this place becomes the center of community life. Coming to the well was about more than just getting water.

The local well is where people TALKED. It is where they shared life. It is where they got caught up on the latest news and gossip. It is where they would labor side by side for a few minutes in the morning and evening getting their water—a common chore that becomes a reason to connect with each other.

Sociologists have studied cultures in our world that “modernized”—where someone has installed plumbing and waterlines to individual houses in the community, and eliminated the common water well. Do you know what usually happens in these villages? They hate it! They come to the well anyway! You see, the well isn't just about water—it is about community! If they stop meeting at the well, the community falls apart. They become disconnected.

So—think again about what this woman says: SHE DOESN'T WANT TO COME TO THE WELL. She doesn't want to connect with her community. She doesn't want to see people face to face. This isn't a joy

for her. Her shame has made this a terrible chore she would rather avoid at all costs!

So next, Jesus responds in a way that shows He wasn't just kidding around about LIVING WATER—that He means real business...

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'

18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."

Yeah, He's a prophet! No doubt! / Jesus has hit a nerve. He exposed her true SPIRITUAL CONDITION. He has shown her that her sin isn't hidden from God.

What happened to her 5 husbands?

It is hard to say what happened to her first 5 husbands / maybe some died / maybe some divorced her—or maybe she left / she clearly has a messy past

But Jesus' is pointing out a moral brokenness in her, and not the stigma of widowhood / This woman is currently involved in a sinful relationship with another guy = She might be living with some she hasn't officially married yet / or even more likely / she is committing adultery with someone else's husband

The point is that she is a moral outcast in her community / she knows of the rumors and gossip that is said behind her back / she knows her reputation / she HATES going to the WELL

No wonder she doesn't want to talk about her personal life with Jesus! / She has been put on the spot, but she quickly changes the subject in next verse...

25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

Think about this—SHAME of our sin keeps us changing the subject. We don't want to be put on the spot. BUT—the ONLY REMEDY for sin and shame is to come to Jesus for FORGIVENESS and HEALING.

Acts 3:19 says that, when we confess our sins and repent of them, they are blotted out before God, and "times of refreshing ... come from the presence of the Lord,"

And James 5:16 says • Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

The only remedy for sin and shame is to come to God / and even to go to a brother or sister in Christ and confess your sin openly, which is where we find healing Yet SHAME of our SIN keeps us from doing exactly what we need to do / and instead, we keep changing the subject!

Well, Jesus gets her back to the main point / which is HIMSELF...

26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

And here it is! Jesus reveals His identity! He is the long-hoped-for Messiah!

Vs 27 • right about this time, the disciples come back and are they are speechless to find Jesus talking to the

Samaritan woman.

But this is the same moment that everything clicks in her mind, and we can see the impact Jesus has made on her heart by her reaction...

28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,
29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

I love that she is in such a rush, she leaves the waterpot behind! Why? *Compared to the relationship with the LIVING WATER, Jesus, a drink of physical water no longer seems as urgent!*

The thing she is most excited about is that Jesus knew everything about her. He told her all the things she ever did—meaning: her broken relationships and her sinful immorality. She had been totally spiritually exposed before Him.

AND AMAZINGLY, this PROPHET, this MESSIAH, this JEWISH RABBI didn't just speak to her gently No, He was even willing to put his own lips on her water pot! There was no more rejection. There was no more SHAME. She no longer had to hide

& Her response demonstrates the transformation that happens in her heart = She goes to her fellow townspeople and invites them out to meet Jesus for themselves!

Let's dig deeper into this topic of SHAME / First, I need to make an important point Shame is NOT ALWAYS a BAD THING in scripture!

SHAME can to be a powerful tool to bring us to REPENTANCE

As we've said each week as the motto for our Emotions Series—*Emotions are an invitation into deeper intimacy with God.*

If you are ashamed and embarrassed about your sin, and this PROPELS you to repentance the refreshing work of forgiveness / this is GREAT. In fact, we have a better term than “SHAME” for this emotion It is more accurately called “CONVICTION”!

This is what God intends for this emotion / as conviction to send us to Himself for forgiveness of sin / and then the removal of the shame!

But—that isn't the way most of us experience SHAME. It often has the opposite effect & this kind of SHAME is NEVER GOOD

This is when SHAME drives us into hiding...

A core meaning of the words for shame in the BIBLE is HIDING or TURNING / It is turning inward, and avoiding contact with others / or else it is turning and running in fear

Shame says, “I can't face you” / I can't bear being exposed before you / I'm afraid you won't accept me / I'm terrified of disappointing you

Think of ADAM and EVE—They were ashamed of their nakedness and afraid of being exposed / they were afraid of what God would think of them and do to them

This is when shame is DEADLY = when it keeps us from God's GRACE.

This is why I love that God goes searching for Adam and Eve in the Garden, calling out to them as they hid in their shame.

And this is why I love that Jesus made sure He was waiting at Jacob's Well in the heat of the day when the ASHAMED Samaritan woman came sneaking out there to get her water in private.

This is how God deals with our shame, when it is keeping us in hiding. He goes after us with the truth of HIS GRACE. It calls to us when we are hiding in fear, turning inward, avoiding relationships, putting on masks, and going through life half-dead because we can't be real about who we truly are.

Let me tell you a personal story...

I was terribly bullied in JH / ganged up on in the locker rooms in my underwear / taunted and tormented by the boys until I broke down in tears

Then / they would spread horrid rumors about me around the school / and kids I didn't even know would call me by disgusting, humiliating nicknames

The worst 2 years of my life / I was totally ashamed of myself—not of my behavior, but because of my horrible self-image

Now—sometimes shame manifests as ASHAMED of who you are / this is when we totally need to find our identity in what JESUS thinks of us / and this was a key reason I survived this horrid season in my life / but this isn't the SHAME lesson I'm driving at. It comes later...

Because of this, I became a people-pleaser / what people thought about me became my highest value

I strove for accomplishments that would give me some measure of dignity / track records & championships / eagle scout, etc. / not so in arrogance, but as self-survival / because I felt so ugly & needed to find something positive and attractive about myself

Growing up as Christian kid, I often talked about being "above reproach" / a spiritual sounding term for "goody two shoes"—But my motive for being "good" was NOT to please God, but rather, to be accepted by people / since I felt so rejected

Fast forward to my adult years / Do you it still affects me when people tease about my goofy appearance or my terrible singing voice? Even though I can laugh it off like its nothing, it sends me right back to JH! / I still seem to care more about what people think of me than God

&, this desire to please people is actually a FEAR OF SHAME / I want to be accepted and not rejected / this is all residual crud from the bullies in JH

But, let me let you in on a little secret—I'm not a perfect person / I am not "above reproach" / I sin like any other person, pastor or not / I'm not the "goody-two-shoes" that I try to appear as

There are some times when I've blown it big time, & I need to admit my sins / confess some things / get right with God / get right with my brothers and sisters in Christ...

But, you know what happens instead? I hide. I am afraid of being exposed. I am afraid of what people will think about me. I am like Adam in the Garden / hiding in the bushes / there have been times when I've need to deal with sin issues, but I'm too terrified to come clean / not because of what God would think—but because of what people would think!

And so, I continue to limp along / hiding my sin / living numb / faking it / afraid to show my face / my true face / terrified of shame / terrified of letting people down / afraid about what they'd think about me

unable to come clean for restoration in my relationship with God and others / unable to join the community of saints who are saved by grace—because I can't be real about my weaknesses

But God is GOOD! / He comes looking for me! He calls to me hiding in the bushes. He sits by the well waits for me to come by. He gets my attention and calls me out of the darkness.

The TRUTH that breaks us out of the deadly fear of shame is THE CROSS. Let me share with you just two verses that wipe out the power SHAME has over us...

Hebrews 12:2 • looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, **despising the shame**, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Think about Jesus—He hated seeing shame in people:

- He spoke kindly to the woman at the well who had been divorced 5 times
- He restored the dignity of the woman caught in the very act of adultery
- He healed a desperate woman who was unclean in her bleeding for 12 years
- He restored the mind of the crazed demoniac among the tombs, raving and cutting himself
- He refused to scorn the immoral woman who worshiped at His feet
- He dined with the Zacchaeus, the ridiculous tree-climbing tax collector

This same Jesus, who despised seeing people in shame, had His clothes were taken from him and divided by lots / and he was hung naked on the cross

His human dignity was stripped from Him / He died in humiliation

And the SHAME wasn't just His physical nakedness / it was the full weight of sin being thrust upon Him / it was Him bearing our sin and becoming sin for us

So, even though He had JOY by His divine knowledge that He was winning to Himself His Bride, the Church / in His humanity, He still DESPISED the HORRIBLE SHAME He had to endure

It is because of the SHAME He endured in Hebrews 12 that Romans 8:1 can declare to us—There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus

Jesus hung naked to provide righteous robes to cover up the nakedness of your SIN / there is no condemnation for you

Now, You will have CONVICTION about sin that needs to be confessed for cleansing and healing / but you are a CHILD OF GOD & you are under NO SHAME

When you trust in Jesus' as your Savior

- His cross says: your sin is paid for, and your nakedness is covered / you have been clothed in a robe of righteousness
- His cross says: That you are accepted / that you have nothing to be ashamed of / and God is never disappointed in you
- His cross says: That what God thinks of you matters infinitely more than what people think of you / there is no comparison

- His cross says: Jesus doesn't reject you / He isn't grossed out by you / He is willing to put His sacred lips to your nasty, germy, sinful cup / He came to share LIFE with you / to be WITH you

- His cross says: that He is waiting for you and calling out to you / offering you true living water, instead of the lifeless water of this world of ours

- His cross says: you are INVITED INTO COMMUNITY with others who have TASTED OF THE SAME GRACE

- & • His cross says: COME FULLY ALIVE and just be who you are: a simple sinner saved by grace / who, because your shame is removed, is able to confess sin, find cleansing, find healing, find restoration, and most importantly, FIND REAL LIFE

Don't let SHAME keep you from God / Don't let SHAME keep you hiding in the shadows / Let your shame simply become CONVICTION that allows you to ACCEPT GOD'S GRACE