

Words of Life – Living Water

By Rev. Matt Nov 1, 2022

Watch – YouTube clip of scene of Jesus with the woman at the well from the series *The Chosen* (8mins)

Not only does this encounter happen in an unexpected place; it occurs between two individuals of very different status and social standing.

Jesus breaks religious and cultural norms to speak to a woman alone in public. He also breaks ethnic bounds to speak to a Samaritan– seen as enemies and unclean by Jews of the day. So, for all these reasons and probably more, the woman is trying to keep Jesus at a distance.

In the clip I love part where Jesus says: "I came to Samaria just to meet you. Do you think it's an accident that I'm here in the middle of the day?"

The Woman replies: "I am rejected by others."

Jesus says: "I know, but not by the Messiah."

Read John 4:5-15

When Jesus speaks of **living water**, we need to know that it was phrase used in Jesus' world for what we call running water – water in a stream or river – rather than a pool or well. Water that's more likely to be fresh and clean than water that's been standing around getting stagnant.

The woman asks to have some living water not realising that if you want to take up Jesus on his offer of running, pure, water, bubbling up inside you, you will have to get rid of the stale, mouldy, stagnant water you've been living off all this time. In her case it was her married life – or there her unmarried life. In my case it was that wounded identity and my deep

belief of unworthiness. To learn to let go of looking to another person to meet all my needs or make me worthy, loved and whole.

In church we can become just a deft as the women in the story in keeping Jesus at arm's length, more hung up on religion, or the impersonal realm of ideas or theology, debate or superficiality. We can become too comfortable or safe in drawing water from old wells that have we have dug for ourselves or wells that dried up or no longer give life. God's desire is to come to your wells, your unexpected or broken places and give you fresh hope and healing.

Questions

1. Where do we keep Jesus at a distance from our lives or avoid the truth, he wants to speak to us?
2. What are the dry wells in your life?
3. How might the Spirit offer you living water in those areas?

Action

Invite anyone who feels that their spiritual well is dry or that Jesus feels distant into the middle of your group and pray for them. Pray words of life and hope over them.

Closing Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for Your pursuing grace, for seeing me in my unloveliness, broken and marred by sin, and for giving everything, Your very life, to claim me as Your treasured own.

Holy Spirit, will You break cycles of shame and unworthiness.
I think of friends who wrestle with guilt, and unforgiveness.
For the sins they have chosen to commit, and the sins committed against
them, Christ, have mercy. Speak Your faithful love over those who have
never known a God of kindness.

Father, I yield to You my hidden places of wound and weariness.
I ask You to reorient my heart towards joy and refresh us with Your new
life. Uncover in my soul a new expectation
for Your kingdom to come on earth
as it is in heaven.

Amen