

Mountain View 16 — Never Be Thirsty Again

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Passages	John 4:1-26
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Introduction (Connection):

[Invite to John 4]

Tension:

Last week we took the morning to celebrate homecoming through baptism as well as studying Jesus' parable about the prodigal son and the perfect Father, which we looked at to illustrate the disposition of the Father towards his son who messed up big.

We see that our heavenly father is waiting with eager anticipation for his son to return as he keeps watch down the road ready to...

- cover our filth and shame with his best robe of righteousness
- to declare us sons and daughters
- and to cover our wounds from wandering so we might finally heal.

I loved getting to share those truths, and in today's text I get to show you that, this isn't just a cute parable Jesus shared, it is the very action of Jesus himself, that there is no boundary Jesus isn't willing to break to get to us to cover us and pour out his grace over us.

Today's text is written proof that Jesus didn't come into the world to condemn the world, but in order to save it.

Exposition:

John 4:1-26 — When Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard he was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (though Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were), ³ he left Judea and went again to Galilee. ⁴ He had to travel through Samaria; ⁵ so he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, worn out from his journey, sat down at the well. It was about noon. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. "Give me a drink," Jesus said to her, ⁸ because his disciples had gone into town to buy food. ⁹ "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" she asked him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would ask him, and he would give you living water." ¹¹ "Sir," said the woman, "you don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do you get this 'living water'?" ¹² You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock." ¹³ Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well^{aa} of water springing up in him for eternal life." ¹⁵ "Sir," the woman said to him, "give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and come here to draw water." ¹⁶ "Go call your husband," he told her, "and come back here." ¹⁷ "I don't have a husband," she answered. "You have correctly said, 'I don't have a husband,' " Jesus said. ¹⁸ "For you've had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." ¹⁹ "Sir," the woman replied, "I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹ Jesus told her, "Believe me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do

know, because salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.” ²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁶ Jesus told her, “I, the one speaking to you, am he.”¹

Recalling John 3, Jesus leaves a growing and thriving multiplication ministry... for one person, one woman, one soul.

v. 4 says something that should have stuck out to you: “He had to travel through Samaria,” not because it was the only way there.

He had to because he was compelled by God’s Spirit to a divine appointment.

Jesus heads through Samaria, he gets to this town called Sychar which held Jacob’s well, Jacob being Israel, the father of the twelve tribes.

This well is pretty significant in Jewish history.

Now, whenever you think of Jesus, you don’t usually picture him bunkered over the wall of a well, panting, saying, “Cramp! Cramp! In through he nose, out through the mouth, just like I designed these bodies.”

But in v. 6, we see Jesus subject himself to exhaustion from the travel and the heat, which shows us his divinity has taken on humanity, so he sits down next to this well.

¹ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), Jn 4:1–26.

In comes this woman... a woman of Samaria, is what she is called... she's never named.

She's coming with her water bucket to draw water... at what time of the day? Noon; all by herself.

Women would usually come in groups to collect water from the well early in the day before the sun was blazing hot.

Not this woman—she is intentionally coming by herself, purposefully risking the dangers of traveling alone in the hottest temperatures of the day to get her water.

Right from the start we see this woman is trying to isolate herself from others, trying to avoid doing routine life with people.

And so far, all her attempts to isolate herself motivated by her shame have been successful, but not for long; Jesus is waiting for her.

Jesus didn't have a bucket, he's exhausted from the trip, his disciples had gone into town to buy food...

So he asks her, "Give me a drink."

She was seeking to be alone; Jesus was seeking her, and he's breaking every social boundary, every religious taboo, and every cultural no-no to do so, and it blows this woman's mind!

v. 9 — "Why on earth are you, a Jewish man, asking for a drink from me, a woman AND a Samaritan?"

And then John inserts his commentary to make sure we understand how crazy this is: **Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.**

Many of you know that for the longest time, women were treated, at best, as second-class citizens below men.

To top that off, this woman Jesus is talking to is a *Samaritan* woman.

Because the Samaritans intermarried with gentiles, they were seen as racial half-breeds whose religion was trashed.²

In fact, Jews later made a law about Samaritan women that is too inappropriate for me to share with you; basically, Samaritan women are untouchable.³

So to use that bucket with her would be worse than a white person using a colored water fountain just a little bit ago in America.

This woman knew the extreme disdain from the Jews...

What she didn't know is that Jesus cannot be made uncleaned.

In fact, Jesus makes clean everything he touches, and he is about to touch this woman's life.

He offers her "Living Water."

Can we pause here and make an observation?

² D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 216.

³ "The daughters of the Samaritans are menstruants from their cradle' (Mishnah Niddah 4:1.) and therefore perpetually in a state of ceremonial uncleanness." D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 217-218.

This comes right after Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, and remember who he was?

Let's contrast Nicodemus with her.

He was a Jewish man, she was a Samaritan woman.

He had a name, she goes unnamed.

He was a well-respected, religious, learned, powerful, orthodox, theologically-trained leader; she was a rejected, immoral, unschooled, marginalized, pagan outcast.

And yet Jesus offers eternal life to both.

Each one shows us something about the missional grace of God.

Nicodemus shows us that no one is beyond the need for God's grace.

This woman shows us that no one is beyond the reach of God's grace.

Why? Because Jesus is willing to get his hands dirty!

Because Jesus is not constrained by man-made taboos or social boundaries that say certain places aren't worth going to or certain people aren't worth going after for the kingdom of God.

Jesus offers all of God's grace to a woman no one would even offer the time of day to!

Listen to what I'm saying:

Nothing puts you outside of the need for or reach of God's grace.

Hear me: no matter your past or your present, Jesus will track you down and offer you living water he purchased with His blood.

What is this living water, you ask? Y'all are so on point today!

Plain and simple, living water is eternal life, which we see in v. 14: this living water becomes a spring fed well that overflows into eternal life.

But let's be more specific.

Living water is (1) a gift from God (2) given by Jesus (3) to satisfy the soul eternally and (4) will never run dry.

First, **living water is a gift from God**, which we see in v. 10 — ***“If you knew the gift of God...”***

Meaning this living water isn't earned, it isn't bought, it isn't deserved...

Secondly, we see in v. 10 that this living water is **given by Jesus**: ***“If you knew... who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would ask him, and he would give you living water.”***

Only the Resurrected Messiah can give us eternal life, because it's his blood that bought it therefore it's His to give to those who ask Him.

Fast-forward to chapter 7, and Jesus, at this massive festival, shouts out loud, *“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸The one who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.”⁴*

Thirdly, we see why it's given: **to satisfy the soul eternally...**

In v. 14 he says, ***“But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again.”***

⁴ [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), Jn 7:37–38.

Can you imagine if one day scientists developed a formula of water that, if you drank it just once, you wouldn't have to drink water ever again.

Cast away on an island with Tom Hanks? No need to bang coconuts up against rocks all day because you've been totally hydrated for three years and without a single sip to drink!

In the middle of the pastor's sermon? No need to get up to go use the restroom, you can't even remember the last time you had to tinkle!

That got weird.

Imagine how amazing that could be!

Jesus is offering that, but for your soul. Your soul will never thirst again because you drank his living water.

One commentator said, "The 'living water' Jesus gives bans thirst forever."

Fourth, we finally see that this living water **never runs dry** in v. 14, that ***"the water... will become a well of water springing up in [us] for eternal life."***

The water Jesus gives itself turns into a source of water, a well that is literally overflowing within us, and never runs dry.

But this woman isn't getting it, is she?

She's thinking physical, just like Nicodemus and crawling back up in His momma's womb.

"Silly sir, you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep!"

Even when she asks for it, she says, "I'll take it so I won't get thirsty again and can stop coming here to get water."

And in saying that, can you hear that she is expressing something more than the inconvenience of drawing water?

Jesus hears more: "I don't like coming out in public like this. If I could avoid this scene every day, that'd be great."

Jesus knows there's something in her life that makes it painful for her to come to a place where all the women gather together and talk.

And this is where things get really awkward; Jesus presses in on what can easily be the deepest wound in this woman's life.

"You want living water? Go, get your husband and come back here."

"I don't have a husband."

You know how you can tell if something has deeply wounded you? You distort the truth to cover up your shame.

"I'm getting by." "I'm doing alright."

"Have you been fighting against temptation?" "Yea, pretty much."

"I don't have a husband."

You may get by misleading us, but you can't mislead Jesus; he knows the truth of the condition of our soul, what we're most ashamed of and why, and he's eager to show us why we're always thirsty.

“You’re right in saying you don’t have a husband. You’ve had five, and you aren’t married to the guy you’re sleeping with right now. So, in a sense, you’re right.”

Now, here is where we need to be really careful.

[Sit down]

We don’t know what happened or the nature of her past.

Was she widowed five times, because that might explain why the sixth guy is like, “Nope, that’s not happening.”

Maybe some of them died, some may have divorced her because they were unfaithful to her, or she was unfaithful to them.

I mean, it could be that some really ungodly men just used her, abused her and left.

Regardless, this explains her extreme efforts to isolate herself from society... because she is overwhelmed with shame, from what she’s done and what has been done to her.

Why would Jesus do this?

I mean, after this, we know her adultery doesn’t get brought back up again; Jesus doesn’t go anywhere with it.

“He didn’t bring it up to find closure. He didn’t bring it up to condemn her. He didn’t bring it up to shame her. He brought it up to expose the deep thirst that she doesn’t even know she has.”⁵

No one goes through sexual relationships with six different people without either starting desperately thirsty or ending desperately thirsty.

Either way, this woman is left with an unquenchable thirst, a deep emptiness and sinfulness that is so painful and shameful that she seals it up.

She keeps her heart on lock down; no one in, no one out, hidden away in darkness.

This is what Jesus knows.

And it is into that darkness that Jesus goes.

Application/Challenge:

You see, this is what I want us so desperately to learn and love this morning, even if it is uncomfortable.

God’s greatest works are in satisfying our greatest thirsts.

We drink in pornography or quick one-nighters or friendships with benefits with no covenant commitments thinking they’re satiating the thirst in our souls, but we get thirsty again and again and again.

⁵ John Piper, “The Tragic Cost of Her Cavernous Thirst” (sermon, Desiring God, June 21, 2009, Bethlehem Baptist Church), available online at <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-tragic-cost-of-her-cavernous-thirst> [accessed online October 16, 2019].

We drink in isolation thinking doing so will deaden the pain of our shame from being sexually or physically abused, believing, "It's better if no one fully knows me..." only to find out isolation leaves us alone with our shame!

We drink in empty platitudes like "they're in a better place," or "now they're finally healed in heaven," only to find out they don't do much to fill the gapping void.

Are you meeting yourself in this woman?

One of the evidences that you haven't drunk the water of life, or that you're quenching its spring, is that you are unstable like this woman, always moving from one thing to the next seeking to fill the void that Jesus promises to fill with His living water.

You may move through sexual partners like she did, or through friends, or jobs, or churches, or hobbies, or hairstyles, or wardrobes, or cars, or locations, thinking the next thing is going to be the silver bullet that will finally kill this thirst in you.

Never able to settle with a kind of deeply contented identity in Christ, satisfied daily with the ever-springing water of his fellowship.

Brothers and sisters, it is in those areas of deep thirst that God seeks to do his greatest works.

I mean, it isn't hard to notice, though it is easy to ignore, how often Jesus drives right the heart of people's greatest sin, hopelessness, guilt, despair, or need.

Every time, he goes after the greatest thirst.

Which shouldn't surprise us: if Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, of course he's going to deal with our sin and

brokenness, because he is aiming to quench the thirst, to satisfy our souls with his salvation, to gratify our groans with his grace, to quench our thirst with the greatest treasure: God!

And just when that water is made available for us through loving accountability or correction and encouragement, instead of drinking it in, what do we tend to do?

What this woman does... deflect.

Even worse, she deflects to doctrine. I mean, she's a smooth cat.

Isn't it so much easier to deflect from personal problems to talk about doctrine or current theological tensions the Church?

We disengage, we deflect so that we don't have to have our greatest thirsts exposed.

In fact, even after Jesus indulged her deflection in clarifying theology about worship, she still isn't satisfied, because she says, "Well... when the messiah shows up, he'll clear up our doctrinal issues."

Jesus says, *"I am the Messiah!*

I am the Bread of Life!

I am the Light of the World!

I am the Living Water!

I am the Good Shepherd!

I am the resurrection and the life!

I am the true vine!

I am the way, the truth, and the life!

I AM enough!

I am what your soul needs.

What you are looking for, you are looking at!

Stop looking everywhere else!

Stop hiding away in sin and shame!

Come to me, all who are thirsty, come and drink, and live."

Conclusion (Cast Vision):

Are you thirsty this morning?

Jesus is inviting you: come and drink.

Come knowing that God is going to work in those areas where you're most thirsty, most ashamed, most doubtful, most guilty, so bring them with you, out into the light with him and with your brothers and sisters, and you will never thirst again.

[Elders will pray with you]