

Everyday Life With Jesus

In our current sermon series, we're studying dramatic encounters that various people had with Jesus in the Gospel of John. On Sunday we began a two-week study of the Woman at the Well.

1. Warm-up Question: When the Woman at the Well first met Jesus, she had no idea he was the Son of God. Who's the most famous person you've ever met? If you've never met a famous person, who's a famous person you'd like to meet?
2. Read John 4:1-10, as printed on p. 3. Jesus was on a long journey by foot traveling 67 miles from Jerusalem in the south to his home in the north in Galilee. By the time he reached Jacob's well near Sychar (pronounced SIGH-car), Jesus had been walking for 40 miles. Verse 6 tells us that "Jesus [was] tired out by his journey."
 - a. When you hear that "Jesus [was] tired out by his journey," how does that make you feel?
 - b. Jeff suggested that verse 6 is not just a reference to Jesus being physically tired, but also emotionally exhausted by the constant demands of his ministry. What aspect of his ministry would you guess was most exhausting to Jesus?
 - c. Where in your life right now are you feeling tired? Talk about how you feel.
3. It's important that we notice how Jesus responded to his tiredness. He didn't rush around everywhere trying to get more things done. He didn't convince himself he was too busy to stop and rest. Instead the text tells us that, as the disciples went into town to get food, Jesus chose to stay behind and sat at the well (vss. 6-8). Maybe he just sat in silence, maybe he sang a song to God, or maybe he told God how tired he was. Whatever he did, the point is: Jesus took a few minutes to renew and re-center himself. This was the first of three key lessons on Sunday: **When we're tired, we should take time to re-center and renew ourselves in God, as Jesus did.**
 - a. When you get exhausted, what's the best way for you to re-center and renew yourself?
 - b. Christian author Stormie Omartian tells about a time when she was emotionally exhausted and cried out, "God, I can't do this anymore!" In response she sensed God saying, "You're trying to do everything in your own strength. Just worship me and I'll do the rest." So Stormie began to say aloud, "I praise you God in the midst of my situation." Slowly the pressure lifted and her burden now belonged to God. Stormie says, "Praise isn't always my first reaction to frustration, so I have to remind myself to do it. But now, when my flesh can't go any further, I stop and worship God." Does praising God help you re-center and renew? If so, why is that? Why does praise make such a difference in how we feel?

- c. Does Sunday worship play an important role in keeping you centered and renewed? Why or why not?
 - d. What keeps us from resting and re-centering ourselves more regularly?
4. As Jesus sat in the quiet by the well, renewing his soul, verse 7 tells us that “a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, ‘Give me to drink.’” So there she was – an ordinary woman in the ordinary flow of an ordinary day going about her ordinary business, when she encountered the Son of God asking her for a cup of cold water, yet she had no idea who he was. From this we drew our second lesson: **Wherever you find yourself, expect to encounter Jesus and to have opportunities to bless him by blessing others. You are where you’re supposed to be.**
- a. In Matthew 10:42, Jesus said, “Whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.” What do you think that means?
 - b. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus said, “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me.” What do you think that means?
 - c. In the Old Testament, Jacob, at a low point in his life, traveling the same route Jesus walked from the south of Israel to the north and camped overnight beside the road out in the middle of nowhere. That night God came to Jacob in a dream with promises of blessing. The next morning Jacob exclaimed, “Surely the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it!” (Genesis 28:16.) When in your life has God been in a situation, but you didn’t realize it until after the fact? Why is it so hard for us to see God’s presence in a situation in the heat of the moment?
 - d. Tell us about a time recently when you’ve been able to give Jesus a cup of cold water by blessing someone else?
5. When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, he was breaking through all kinds of racial, religious, and gender-based barriers. Samaritans were ethnically different from Jews and practiced an unorthodox variation of Judaism. Jews despised Samaritans so much they believed touching something they had touched would contaminate them. Various Jewish rabbis also taught that men should not talk to women in public. That’s why when Jesus asked the Samaritan woman to give him a drink, she replied in verse 9, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria? (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)” From this we drew our third lesson: **Jesus was a boundary breaking bridge builder, and so should we!**
- a. Where does sexism come from and why is it so strong?
 - b. Where does racism come from and why is it so strong?

- c. Where does religious discrimination come from and why is it so strong?
- d. What are some ways we can break through racial, religious, and gender-based biases and build bridges among different kinds of people?

John 4:1-10

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John”—² although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized—³ he left Judea and started back to Galilee. ⁴But he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar [SIGH-car], near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” ⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”