

- Let us pray
- ...
- Amen!
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- **Last week...Nicodemus**

- Last week we looked at the sacred story of Nicodemus coming to Jesus at night as told in John-3
- John told this story to illustrate that one of God's chosen people – a leader of the Jews – was spiritually lost...
- Nicodemus could not see Jesus as anything more than a gifted rabbi – a teacher...
- <slide> another def
- Jesus used the analogy of being born "another", that is being born again – from above to try to teach Nicodemus about the Kingdom of God...
- In the story, Nicodemus never did understand Jesus...
- Later in life Nicodemus was changed, but not in our story last week...
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- **The Story... Woman at the Well**

- In today's passage we have another sacred story
- It has several parallels to the Nicodemus story...
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- Jesus wants to reach out to the lost people of Samaria...
- We find him at a well in the middle of the day without a means to draw any water for a drink...
- A woman, a Samaritan woman, comes to draw water...
- Jesus had a plan to reach the Samaritans and it started with this woman...

- **<slide> John 4:4-7**

4 But he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. 7 Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

- Shocking
- Engaging
- Written to Catch the attention of readers
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- So the woman responds

- **<slide> John 4: 9-10-11**

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" 10 Jesus 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.” 11 The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?

- Jesus uses the opening in the conversation to further engage the woman in discussion...
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- <slide> living water
- Another dual meaning word: living water
- >> explain
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- John uses this dual meaning to show that the woman is focused on the physical nature of water just as Nicodemus was focused on the physical detail of being born again from his mother...
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- Because the woman comes back with:
Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water
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- It is clear that the woman is not understanding what Jesus is trying to teach...
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- Jesus then tries a different approach...

- He starts talking about the personal details of the woman's life...
- Bingo!
- The woman is now starting to see Jesus in a different light!
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- **Hidden meanings in the story**
 - In the Nicodemus story, Nicodemus was a respected leader of the Jews... a person with stature.
 - The Samaritan woman was a member of a hated people, literally an enemy of the Jews...
 - As a woman, especially a woman without a husband, she would have been a "nobody", a person with no standing in her community.
 - And yet John shows the respected person – Nicodemus - resisting Jesus
 - contrasted with the nobody woman – from Samaria - engaging with Jesus and witnessing about Him to the townspeople.
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 - John documents the woman talking about the well that Jacob gave to the Hebrews.
 - That was a very sacred story to the Jews...
 - By having the woman compare Jacob's well water with Jesus' living water, John has helped his readers see the significance of Jesus' offer...

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- Another of the hidden points is around the woman's question about the proper place to worship.
- One thought is that she is changing the subject away from her past...
- However, there may be a better insight...
- One of the more divisive issues between the Jews and Samaritans was around the correct place to worship God...
- The Jews saw it as Jerusalem...
- The Samaritans saw Mt. Gerizim...
- We aren't as familiar with Mt. Gerizim, but that mountain is one with special significance to the Hebrews and was a sacred place...
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- The woman is beginning to understand Jesus as having a special understanding or relationship with God...
- John is showing her as respecting Jesus and wanting his input on this hotly contested question of where to worship...
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- Jesus quickly takes the conversation about where to worship and redirects it towards the true meaning of worship which is glorifying God the Father!
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- The purpose of Jesus' visit to Samaria is to reach those lost sheep...
- The woman witnesses to the townspeople which in turn encourages them to engage Jesus...
- Because the woman listened to Jesus and shared His Good News, many more people were saved!
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- In vs 14 Jesus refers to eternal life... Remember that eternal life is not after we die...
- The joy of eternal life starts when we come to Jesus as our Lord and Savior...
- Eternal life is all about the joy in our heart when we have the constant presence of Holy Spirit in our heart...
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- That eternal joy is what Jesus is offering the woman at the well...
- And to us today...
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- **What can we learn?**
 - I believe there are three things that we can learn from this passage in John
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- **Reassurance**
 - <slide> Reassurance

- John is writing to reassure the early Christians of the validity and truth of Jesus as Messiah, Lord and Savior...
- The people of that time needed this reassurance...
- Their life was hard... they were severely persecuted by the Romans...
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- And today we also need that reassurance that Jesus is Lord...
- Until this virus epidemic hit, our lives were generally easy...
- But life has many distractions...
- It's easy to get off-track...
- Reading the sacred story of the woman at the well helps us reinforce our faith in Jesus...
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- We hear again the promise that Jesus makes of giving us eternal life...
- Having Jesus in our hearts... forever...
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- **One person's witness**
 - <slide> Witness
 - Another teaching that we get from this story is the impact of a single person's witness...
 - We are called to Share the Good News with those around us...

- Letting them see the warmth and light of Jesus in our hearts, our lives, and in our actions...
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- Jesus interacted directly with the woman at the well...
- It wasn't until the woman witnessed to the townspeople that they came to Jesus...
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- They came to Jesus with questions...
- With doubts...
- But they listened...
- And they believed... because of one, outcast woman...
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- We are called to be like that woman...
- Sharing our love of Jesus with others...
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- **Today's Health Crisis**
 - <slide> Epidemic
 - The last point that we learn from this story is how it applies to our lives in this coronavirus epidemic...
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 - In our Gospel passage the woman is concerned about having to go to the well to get water for drinking, washing...
 - That is her initial focus in the story...

- When Jesus starts talking to her, that is where her mind is...
- Jesus offers eternal life to her...
- But she is thinking about drinking water...
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- Jesus does not offer an automated water system to her...
- He offers her eternal life...
- Jesus cared about the woman's heart... her soul...
- Jesus offered something to her that had no price... it could not be purchased...
- It was a gift from God...
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- I don't believe that God caused this coronavirus to come into being and to spread throughout the world...
- It is just the nature of a broken and troubled world...
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- I don't believe that God wants us to suffer...
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- I do believe that God is present in our health care system...
- In the doctors, nurses, and others that strive to relieve the suffering of people...
- In the scientists and others that develop cures and vaccinations...

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- I do believe that God works through our government, leaders and people in our country to bring about good...
- To minimize the suffering brought about by this sickness...
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- **Summary/Closing**

- <slide> path
- I believe that God wants us to see His glory in moving and inspiring people to rise above their human nature to love and help others...
- God will work for the good in this tragic situation!
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- In these tragic times we need to be vigilant for ways that we can be of service...
- Prayer...
- Looking out for our neighbors...
- Using the telephone or email to contact people we know to see how they are doing...
- And in all things give glory to God!
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- Thanks be to God...
- Amen!
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