



PALM SUNDAY THE POWER OF AN INVITATION

April 14, 2019

Pastor Keith Jenkins

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

TEXT: Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. **(Luke 15:1-7)**

Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

"I knew about God
but I didn't know God.
The Woman at the Well
didn't know it all but
she knew God."

-Pastor Keith

Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.

*They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world." **(John 4:1-42)***

MESSAGE SUMMARY

While Jesus was on earth, he often spent time with those that society and the religious leaders of his day rejected. The religious authorities were shocked by his behavior, but it didn't phase Jesus one bit. In John 4, we have an example of Jesus interacting with someone who the rest of society would have written off, a Samaritan woman with a less than perfect past.

Jesus' interaction with this woman is a great example to us as we interact with those around us. We should never write people off because of the group they belong to, the way that they look, or the way they have lived their life. We are not to condemn, but to approach gently. Jesus doesn't deny the truth as he speaks to this woman, nor does he take her to task. He simply speaks to her with love and respect, even as he speaks of her past mistakes. Because of their conversation, this rejected woman ends up bringing her whole village out to meet Jesus. This passage calls us to follow Jesus' example in our own lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Have you ever been so excited about something that you just couldn't keep it to yourself? What were you excited about?
2. When was the last time you did something well, even though you weren't prepared or well equipped for it? What happened?
3. What was your high/low for this past week (or since group last met)? What was the best thing that happened and the worst thing that happened?
4. Have you ever committed a faux pas, either in a different culture or just in an unfamiliar environment?

**DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS,
CONT.**

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What is the first thing that Jesus says to the Samaritan woman?
How does he approach her?
2. Which person, the woman or Jesus, asks more questions in the conversation?
How are those questions answered?
3. What is the woman's reaction when Jesus brings up her past?
What does that tell you about the woman?
4. What do you think the people of the town thought about this woman based on what is revealed about her in this text? Would the townspeople have had a generally positive or generally negative opinion of her?
5. What does the woman do after her conversation with Jesus? What was the result of her actions?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. In Jewish culture, Samaritans were looked down on and seen as half-breeds.
What are some people groups that are looked down on in our culture today?
What kinds of people are generally looked down on by Christians/religious people?
2. The Samaritan woman in this story was not only looked down on by the Jews but by her own village and neighbors because of her past. What are some things that people go through today that can cause them to be rejected by even their own friends and family today?
3. Jesus was willing to engage the Samaritan woman in conversation, even though it crossed a cultural barrier. How have you seen Christians cross cultural barriers well? How have you seen them interact with culture poorly?
4. Jesus started out his conversation with the Samaritan woman by asking her for something. How could Christians today approach people in a similar manner?
5. Despite her reputation and her lack of knowledge, the people in the village were willing to listen to the woman in this story. How have you seen God use ill-equipped people to draw others to Him?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What is one group of people that you have difficulty interacting with?
What makes it difficult for you to interact with them?
2. Have you ever been rejected because of something you did or something that happened to you? How has this experience helped you become more gracious to others (or how could it)?
3. What factors keep you from sharing Jesus with other people or asking them to church? What could you do to overcome these factors?
4. How are you engaging with people outside of the church? Do you have opportunities to request something of them like Jesus did with the Samaritan woman?
What might that look like?

**DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS,
CONT.**

5. Have you ever shared Jesus with someone and they asked you a question you didn't know the answer to? What happened?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What's one thing that you could do this week to engage someone you would normally feel uncomfortable interacting with? How can your group pray for you in this endeavor?
2. Is there someone you feel called to invite to church or tell about Jesus? What can you do this week to start that conversation? How can your group pray for you in the process?