

“I Know” – Pr Jim Sprengle – Lent 3 – March 12, 2023

- I. **John 4:25-26** – “²⁵ The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ). When He comes, He will tell us all things.’ ²⁶ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”
- II. **The woman at the well...**
 - a. This story has captivated people for centuries – especially when we get into the social norms of the day.
 - b. For those who are watching The Chosen series, it shows a little bit of the hard feelings between the Samaritans and the Jewish people.
 - i. The Samaritans go all the way back to the time just after King Solomon’s death – as King Jeroboam led the Northern Kingdom.
 1. Jeroboam was so afraid that the people under his leadership would keep going to Jerusalem to worship in the Southern Kingdom that he set up shrines and a golden calf to worship.
 2. Thus began the split where people from the Southern Kingdom and Jerusalem considered the Samaritans idolaters and “half-breeds” ... who walked away from the one true God.
 - ii. Samaritans likely understood the Jewish history, which was their own, but for centuries they did not worship the true God.
 - iii. The word for those outside the Jewish faith was “Gentile” – but Samaritans were worse because they had forsaken their heritage.
 1. In fact, Jewish people saw the Samaritans like they were in a constant state of “uncleanness” or ceremonially unclean, which made everything they touched unclean as well.
 2. Maybe you remember little kids not wanting to touch each other because they might get “cooties” – well, this was a real problem for the Jews of that day – as they did not want to become unclean!
 - c. So, the pressure begins to mount on Jesus from the religious leaders around Jerusalem as the crowds were now flocking to Jesus instead of John the Baptist... it was time to head north to Galilee.
 - i. Where did the group need to go through to get home? Samaria.
 - ii. I’m sure there were longer routes to go, but Jesus uses this time to plant seeds among the people there... about who God really is.
 - d. Around noon, Jesus is resting at Jacob’s well, which is still in the Holy Land today.
 - i. A woman, a Samaritan woman, is getting water when no one else would be around – in the heat of the day – probably because her lifestyle is not even acceptable to Samaritan standards.

- ii. Jesus then crosses all boundaries and asks her to give Him a drink – a woman in a continual state of uncleanness, who has such an immoral background that she is rejected by her own peers.
- iii. Jesus offers her “living water” – which to her means something like a spring or fountain that bubbles up continually – so she asks what the source is... (vs 11)
 - 1. She even points out that this is a well from Jacob – in the line of Abraham – so what could be better than water from here?
 - 2. Nothing is greater than what Jesus has to offer, because He isn’t talking about water from a well or a fountain, but the Holy Spirit and faith.
 - 3. Yet, the conversation takes a more personal tone...

III. **Jesus knows the woman has deeper issues that need addressing.**

- a. Why don’t you go get your husband and bring him here?
 - i. Typical of someone who doesn’t want to get too personal, she simply replies that she doesn’t have a husband.
 - ii. Jesus knows... He says, “Yeah, you are absolutely correct... you’ve had five husbands and now you’re shacking up without being married!”
 - 1. By the way, tell me that Jesus doesn’t care about people living together outside of marriage – this clearly shows Jesus is calling that kind of behavior out.
- iii. And now the woman is all ears... she “perceives” that Jesus is a prophet...
 - 1. Much more than a prophet... The Messiah that even the Samaritans knew a little something about – the Savior was paying her a personal visit.
- b. After our reading ends today, it says the woman ran back to the village saying, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did.” (vs 29)
 - i. Jesus knows everything about me!
 - ii. By the way, is that good or bad?

IV. **Jesus says, “I know.”**

- a. Maybe you’ve heard the stories of a parent or a pastor who tells the kids that Jesus is watching over them... and one child is comforted, while another is worried God will catch them doing bad things.
- b. On one level, it is so comforting that Jesus knows us perfectly, but on the other hand, it can be incredibly uncomfortable that Jesus knows our sins.
- c. A couple of weeks ago, we read Psalm 32 – which talks about confessing and repenting of our sins... but in verse 3 it says, “For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away.”
 - i. Sins... the sins that we try to hide from the people around us and God will break us down – will lead to degeneration in our faith lives.

- ii. I've used this illustration before, but we grow sin calluses...
 - 1. A guy told me that he drank the same coffee every single day, but on his way to work, he hit a bump and it splashed on his upper lip and burned him pretty bad.
 - 2. Why can our mouths handle hot, because we have conditioned them to – almost like we have put calluses on our hands...
 - 3. Sin is a lot like that... as we do things that are against the Lord's will in our lives, the first time we are anxious and sad.
 - a. But after a while, we get used to doing it and it gets easier and easier...
 - b. Pretty soon we've had five broken marriages and it doesn't even cross our minds that living with the next guy is even a problem.
- d. My calling in your lives is two-fold –
 - i. As your pastor, I am here to tell you what the Bible – what God – says about sin... that way you have no excuses to say you didn't know... and I am to call you to repent.
 - ii. But I'm also here to tell you about the grace of God and His astonishing forgiveness.
- e. Never would I want you to leave here comfortable in your sin, but never would I want you to leave here questioning God's love for you.

V. **The living water that Jesus speaks of is yours... through faith.**

- a. The Holy Spirit has come to you at some point in the past to give this gift of faith, and now we have a spring of life welling up from within us that is God Himself! (John 7:37-39)
- b. Perhaps one of the most comforting verses in the Bible comes from our reading in Romans 5 today, "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (vs 8)
- c. Jesus says, "I know exactly where you have fallen short... exactly where you have failed Me... I know every last thing... and I still want you to come home."
- d. You no longer have to come to the well in the heat of the day in shame and rejection...
 - i. You no longer have to live in the brokenness that comes from unrepentant sin...
 - ii. Jesus says, "I know all about you, and I love you"
- e. I'm not sure what kinds of sins are in your lives that you have become callused to... or what areas of your life you need to turn over to the Lord and seek His forgiveness... but He knows... and He wants you to come home to Him.
- f. Jesus gave you the living water long ago in your baptism and through faith as the Holy Spirit entered you – and now we are justified – or "not guilty"

- i. In that grace that was won for you on the cross, Jesus is fully aware of your status as both sinner and saint.
- ii. You are forgiven, you are home in Jesus, and God knows exactly who you are – His child. Amen.