

LIVING WATER

(John 4:5-42)

Intro: One of the things I like about riding my bike along the Arkansas River.
-Water.

#Not just the water in the river.

*When there is water in the river.

*Which creates a nice ambiance.

#But the drinking water.

*There are drinking fountains every mile or two.

+On both sides of the river.

*Unlike along the Creek Turnpike.

+Between Riverside and Northeastern State University.

=On the southeast side of Broken Arrow.

+There are only two drinking fountains.

=On that whole 13-mile stretch.

=No bathrooms.

*This time of the year.

+All of the drinking water is cold.

*In the summertime.

+My favorite drinking fountain is near the old railroad bridge.

=Near Riverside and 31st.

+Water is always cold there.

=I've never figured out.

-If there is a water cooler connected there.

-If the fountain is connected to an underground spring.

-Every:

#Walker.

#Jogger.

#Bicyclist.

*Knows where to find the water.

I. It Was Even More Important To Know Where To Find Water In Biblical Times.

A. People Of Israel Took 40 Years To Cross The Sinai Peninsula.

1. Barely 200 miles.

a. But it took 40 years!

b. That's 5 miles per year—if they had gone in a straight line.

2. Sinai was/is:

a. Dessert.

b. Mountains.

3. There were no:
 - a. Drinking fountains.
 - b. Bathrooms.
 4. Little wonder.
 - a. Israelites complained to Moses about the lack of water.
 - b. God had to provide water from a rock.
- B. Jesus Had To Know Where To Find Water.
1. Jesus was human.
 - a. God in human form.
 - b. He got thirsty.
 - Hanging on the cross he said:
"I thirst."
*John 19:28.
 - Walking through Samaria.
He got thirsty.
*John 4:5-7.
 2. What was Jesus doing in Samaria?
 - a. Simple answer.
 - He was traveling.
From Judea.
To Galilee.
*John 4:3.
 - Going through Samaria.
Shortest route.
*Although not necessarily the easiest route.
+That would have been:
=Through the Jordan River Valley.
 - b. More complex answer.
 - God wanted him there.
John 4:4.
*"He had to go through Samaria."
Little 3-letter word in Greek.
*δῆϊ.
+Most often means "divine necessity."
-Why would God want him there?
 3. Jews and Samaritans didn't get along very well.
 - a. Samaritans were descendants.
 - Of those Israelites.
Who married foreigners.
 - After the Assyrians:
Conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
*In 722 B.C.
Controlled their conquests by resettling people.

- Those descendants settled in Samaria.
 - #2 Kings 17:24-41.
- For full-blooded Jews.
 - #Samaritans were:
 - *Half-breeds.
 - *Mulattoes.
 - *Impure.
- b. When the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
 - Exiled in Babylon.
 - #By Nebuchadnezzar.
 - #In 586 B.C.
 - *Samaritans tried to establish "squatters rights."
 - +In Judah.
 - +In Jerusalem.
 - Returned from exile.
 - #50 years later.
 - #Samaritans offered to help them rebuild the Jerusalem Temple.
 - *Judeans/Jews told them, "No thanks."
 - +Ezra 4:1-5.
 - *Samaritans built their own temple.
 - +In Samaria.
 - +On Mount Gerizim.
 - =Temple that was destroyed.
 - By the Jerusalem religious establishment.
 - In 128 B.C.
 - There was no love lost between:
 - #Judeans/Jews.
 - #Samaritans.
 - 4. Jesus was looking for water.
 - a. In Samaria.
 - b. At a town called Sychar.
 - In the shadow of Mount Gerizim.
 - c. From a Samaritan woman.
 - Who was at Jacob's Well.
 - #At noon.
 - Fetching water was usually women's work.
 - #When Jesus' disciples wanted to know:
 - *Where they should prepare the Passover meal.
 - +For Jesus.
 - +For the other disciples.
 - =Prior to his:
 - Arrest.
 - Trial.
 - Crucifixion.

#Jesus.

*Sent them into the city (Jerusalem).

*Told them:

+To look for a man carrying a jar of water.

+To follow him home.

=That's where they were to prepare the Passover meal.

-Mark 14:12-16.

-Luke 22:7-13.

#Man carrying water would have stood out in a crowd.

*Fetching water was usually women's work.

-Fetching water was usually done:

#Early in the morning.

#In the evening.

*Genesis 24:11.

#Not in the heat of the day.

-Samaritan woman was there at the well at noon.

#In the middle of the day.

#All by herself.

*Why?

+Was she a "slug-a-bed?"

=Who couldn't get her buns out of bed.

-Early in the morning.

+Did she choose to go at noon?

=When no one else was likely to be around.

=Because the other women had shunned her.

-Perhaps because:

#She had had five husbands.

#She was living with a man.

*Who was not her husband.

5. But there they were.

a. Jesus.

b. Samaritan woman.

-Breaking:

#Rules.

#Taboos.

#Barriers.

*Man and woman.

+Man would not normally talk to a woman not his wife.

=In public.

*Jew and Samaritan.

-Samaritan woman called Jesus:

#Judean/Jew (John 4:9).

-Judeans/Jews later accused Jesus of being:

#Samaritan (John 8:48).

6. Maybe that's the point.
 - a. Jesus belonged:
 - To no group.
 - To every group.
 - b. When I went to Greece.
 - On a *Footsteps of St. Paul* tour.
 - #In 1995.
 - There were two distinct groups.
 - #Congregational Church.
 - *From Bristol, Connecticut.
 - #Presbyterian Church.
 - *From Williamsburg, Virginia.
 - There was me.
 - #Congregational folks.
 - *Kind of a clique.
 - #Presbyterian folks.
 - *Kind of a clique.
 - #I:
 - *Didn't belong to either one.
 - *Free to float between one group and the other.
 - +Catalyst to break down the barriers between the two.
 - *Belonged:
 - +To no group.
 - +To every group.

II. Jesus Became Living Water For Everyone Who Needed A Drink.

- A. Jesus Was At Jacob's Well.
 1. Not only to get a drink.
 - a. It was the middle of the day.
 - b. He was thirsty.
 - c. He needed water.
 2. But:
 - a. To provide living water.
 - b. To be living water.
 - There are three places where the phrase "living water."
 - #Used in the Old Testament.
 - *Isaiah 49:10.
 - *Jeremiah 2:13.
 - *Jeremiah 17:13.
 - #Refers to:
 - *Yahweh.
 - *Lord God.

- Jesus became living water.
 - #For the Samaritan woman.
 - *Who was:
 - +Dry.
 - +Thirsty.
 - =In more ways than one.
 - Socially.
 - Spiritually.
 - *Who needed barriers broken down.
 - +In more ways than one.
 - =Socially.
 - =Spiritually.
 - *Perhaps she had been looking for life-giving water.
 - +In the wrong:
 - =Places.
 - =Well.
 - +In ways that did not:
 - =Satisfy.
 - =Satisfy for long.

3. One sip of living water from Jesus.
 - a. Samaritan woman believed Jesus was:
 - Messiah.
 - Savior of the world.
 - b. Samaritan woman had news too good to keep to herself.
 - Barriers or no barriers.
 - She was all over town.
 - #Sharing her testimony.
 - #Inviting others.
 - *To come.
 - *To see for themselves.
 - *To hear for themselves.

B. Jesus Is Living Water For Us.

1. If we would but recognize that living water.
 - a. In the waters of Holy Baptism.
 - b. In the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper.
 - c. In the Word of God.
 - Written.
 - Read.
 - Proclaimed.
2. Maybe we look for living water in the wrong places.
 - a. Gaelic word.
 - For "living water."
 - Gives us our English word "whiskey."

- b. Are we chasing mirages?
 - Substances.
 - Possessions.
 - People.
 - Activities.
 - #We think will quench our thirst.
 - #But they don't:
 - *Satisfy.
 - *Satisfy for long.
- 3. Living water that Jesus offers.
 - a. Satisfies:
 - Forever.
 - For eternity.
 - b. Obliterates boundaries.
 - Race.
 - Nationality.
 - Gender.
 - Sexual orientation.
 - Economic status.
- 4. We are "Rekindling the Fire."
 - a. Our process of congregational renewal.
 - As we have been sharing our:
 - #Visions.
 - #Dreams.
 - Not uncommon response is:
 - # "We want our congregation to grow."
 - That's part of our mission statement, as well.
 - #Responding to God's love,
 - #We faithfully
 - *Welcome.
 - *Worship.
 - *Grow.
 - *Witness.
 - *Serve.
 - There is more than one way to grow.
 - #We can grow:
 - *Spiritually.
 - *Numerically.
 - b. Historically.
 - Many mainline denominations grew.
 - #Including the Lutheran Church.
 - Because the boats kept bringing more immigrants from:
 - #Norway.
 - #Sweden. / Where folks were already: Christian.
 - #Germany. / Lutheran.

- This congregation grew.
 - #When this part of Tulsa was growing.
 - c. So now what?
 - Boats have long since stopped coming.
 - #At least boats from places:
 - *Where most of our ancestors came from.
 - #Many would like to turn the immigration spigot off altogether.
 - *Legal.
 - *Otherwise.
 - #So how are we going to grow?
 - Population of Tulsa proper, including this part of town.
 - #Plateaued.
 - *Begun to decline.
 - #Aging.
 - *Enrollment in Tulsa Public Schools.
 - +Half of what it once was.
 - +Majority of students are now minorities.
 - #So how are we going to grow?
 - Many have said:
 - #They joined this congregation.
 - *Because someone they know invited them.
 - #How many have joined.
 - *Because you invited them.
 - #So how are we going to grow?
 - d. Rick Warren.
 - Purpose Driven Church*.
 - Many ask the question:
 - #“What do we need to do to make our church grow?”
 - Warren proposes a different question:
 - #“What is keeping our church from growing?”
 - e. What are the barriers? What are the boundaries?
 - We impose.
 - #Intentionally.
 - #Unintentionally.
 - Others perceive.
 - #Real.
 - #Imagined.
5. Jesus’ disciples.
- a. Wondered why Jesus was talking.
 - To this woman.
 - To this Samaritan woman.
 - To this Samaritan woman who had had five husbands.
 - #And was living with someone who was not her husband.

- b. Jesus said:
 - “Look at the harvest.”
 - “Harvest is greater than you can imagine.”
 - “There is even a harvest you didn’t have to plant.”
- 6. Let’s go back to the well.
 - a. Back to the living water.
 - b. Back to the one.
 - Raised up on the cross.
 - #To see beyond the:
 - *Boundaries.
 - *Barriers.
 - +We create.
 - Whose cross becomes a battering ram.
 - #Destroying:
 - *Boundaries.
 - *Barriers.
 - +We create.
 - Who offers living water to all who are thirsty.

Concl: I told you where the coldest water is on the Tulsa bike trails.

- Do you remember where that is?
 - #Near the old railroad trestle.
 - *Now a pedestrian bridge.
- Why would I tell you that?
 - #Because I’ve experienced it for myself.
 - #Because there is plenty to go around.
 - #Because it’s too good not to share.

Jesus is living water.

- We have experienced it for ourselves.
- There is plenty to go around.
- What is keeping us from sharing it?