



Devotional for Tuesday, August 10, 2010

"Standing Strong in the Midst of a Heat Wave"

Houston, among other parts of the country, has been experiencing an unprecedented heat wave lately. News commentators instruct us on the various ways runners, construction workers and others need to stay hydrated while outdoors and suggest the hours to stay inside, if possible. Sales of bottled water have skyrocketed as people attempt to quench their thirst.

As we sat in our air conditioned church today, Rev. Veal brought the message on a familiar topic--Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman as found in [John 4:7-19](#). The passage provides insight into societal protocol during those times; Jews and Samaritans didn't particularly like each other and didn't communicate. And, men usually didn't speak to women without benefit of their husband being in their presence.

As Pastor delved further into the message, we also learned that the Samaritan woman had chosen a different path to deal with a complex situation. She chose to go to Jacob's well in the middle of the day, when it was extremely hot, rather than gather with other women in the cool of the morning. Most Samaritans would never have encountered Jesus on their trek to the well and most Jews would have taken a different route to avoid Samaria altogether.

Jesus may have disturbed the woman's peace and certainly caught her by surprise when he asked her to give him a drink of water, with no provision of his own to do so. She knew that Jews wouldn't normally be caught talking to Samaritans but recognized there was something different in this exchange. When Christ offered her "living water," she wanted to thirst no more. Of course, He had a greater purpose for this conversation:

¹⁵The woman said, "Sir, give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty, won't ever have to come back to this well again!"

¹⁶He said, "Go call your husband and then come back."

As we reflect on this, we realize that Jesus was waiting to learn if the woman would acknowledge the truth regarding her marital status. And, probably to her surprise, he proceeded to finish her story...

¹⁷⁻¹⁸"I have no husband," she said.

"That's nicely put: 'I have no husband.' You've had five husbands, and the man you're living with now isn't even your husband. You spoke the truth there, sure enough."

Pastor brought another thought to mind regarding this story as well. The Samaritan woman was thirsty; perhaps looking for love in all the wrong places. She knew how to attract a man since she had five husbands along with the man she was presently living with. But, nothing was totally satisfying; nothing quenched her thirst, no matter how often she tried.

What quenches your thirst?

Prayer: Father, many of us are in the middle of a heat wave and it's miserable. Like the woman at the well, our thirst has not been quenched. Bottled water just won't do. We need You!

The Samaritan woman faced her truth and so must we. We can summarize all of our sins when we pray, but You know all. We don't want to acknowledge the number of marriages we've had or the relationships that have not been pleasing to You. We can wait to come out from our secret hiding places or private prisons, so we don't encounter others on the journey, but we can't truly hide from You!

Some of us are looking for fame; some have a thirst for treasures on earth; some of us may identify with the woman at the well, looking for love in all the wrong places.

We thank You for the living water and for quenching a thirst that nothing and no one else can do. We are grateful for Your provision and for helping us...

Stand strong in the middle of a heat wave.

In His Love,

Carla