



CONCORD
SUNDAY
SCHOOL

LECTIONARY
LESSON 11

SUNDAY,
MARCH 15,
2020

John 4:7-15 NRSV

7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” 8 (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)^[a] 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? 12 Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” 13 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” 15 The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

Background

The lectionary passages this season focus heavily on what it means to be reborn and remade. We have just spent time with Nicodemus who wonders, “how can one be

born again?” In this passage, we meet a woman at a well who is rumored to have had five husbands. We’re focusing on verses 7-15, but the lectionary passage includes verses 5-42. In your own devotional period, think about what Jesus might be saying to his followers by having this intentional conversation. What is the underlying tone of his conversation with her?

Today’s lesson will focus on suspending assumptions.

Read the scripture out loud together.

Discuss with a partner. Have you ever made an assumption about someone? Has someone ever made an assumption about you?

What’s happening during this passage?

A woman comes to draw water and Jesus meets her at the well. In the middle of her drawing water for herself, he asks her for a drink. She’s startled. She wants to know why Jesus would ask her for something, knowing that Samaritans and Jewish people do not share things together. It was a cultural taboo. Jesus responds “if you knew who I was, you’d know that I could give you living water.” She’s still skeptical. She says, “where’s your bucket? Don’t you know this was built by our ancestor Jacob?” Jesus says, “the water I have will never let you feel thirsty. Everyone who drinks from it will be satisfied. Finally, the woman lets her guard down and asks for this living water.

Why is it significant that this is a Samaritan woman?

Throughout the gospels, the writers play with the idea of “the outsider.” The unexpected character often takes the central figure. Even though all four gospels tell a story of Jesus feeding many people at once, it is the gospel of John that tells the story of the feeding of 5,000+ people from a boy’s lunch. The other gospels forget this child. Using characters that might otherwise be overlooked, like children or Samaritan women, is a way to point to the non-discriminating power of God. If we read these passages as we should, we will be reminded that God knows who to use and when.

How might this woman feel?

Later on in the passage, we learn that Jesus knows about her romantic and sexual life. She’s known as the woman who has had “five husbands” and the one she has

now is “not her husband.” She is known as someone who has been linked to more than one husband. As we heard in last week’s sermon, “Shamed and Used,” it is interesting that the blame is at the foot of this woman, and not at the foot of the other husbands she is rumored to have. There is little consideration for the fact that in order for a woman to survive in this society, she **must** be someone’s wife. We don’t know her full story, and neither does Jesus.

Perhaps at the well, she was startled by Jesus’ conversation. First, he’s Jewish and she’s Samaritan. But most obviously, she is a woman and he is a man. Perhaps she thought he was giving her an empty pickup line. Perhaps she thought he was trying to tease or humiliate her. Perhaps it was something else entirely. In any case, something happened in their interaction that helped her let her guard down. And she would go on to continue to tell the story of Jesus.

What questions do you still have of this scripture? How will you commit to journeying with this text this week?

Connection to Today’s World

A few years ago, a man named Daniel José Older was in the middle of giving his opinion about a police-involved shooting. As he was sharing his opinion that the tardiness of the medics likely killed victim Antonio Martin in Missouri, someone asked “well, where’s your medical license, since you know everything?” Immediately, Mr. Older whipped out his Emergency Medical Services card. The foolish questioner was shamed into silence. This person believed that because Mr. Older looked as he did (a



young Latino man) that he did not have any medical expertise. So often we make assumptions about people, based on their race, age, accent, body type, religion. Jesus reminds us that we are worthy of conversation, worthy of good news, worthy of care. And sometimes, the expert opinion comes from the person we least expect. No matter what the world says.

Journal: Where have you made assumptions? What helped you get past your assumptions?

Closing: Sing “Amazing Grace.”

*“Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come.
T’was grace that brought us safe thus far
And grace will lead us home.”*

Prayer:

Dear God,

You are the God who meets us at any hour of the day. You have been the God of our weary years and of our silent tears.

As we journey through this Lenten season with you, be gentle to us. Help us to come to you with our questions and wonders. Teach us to be persistent about the Faith. We will seek your face knowing that you will open the door and talk with us. Sustain us in your word, and keep us from making the same mistakes that the world makes. Help us to see our neighbors with the eyes you have.

In Jesus’ name we pray,

Amen

<https://gawker.com/paramedic-owns-idiot-in-christmas-twitter-miracle-1674954512>