



IN SEARCH OF TRUE WORSHIPERS

Part 1

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks”

(John 4:23 NIV)

It was a mindless, routine task. As she had countless times before, she made her way through the city streets of Sychar towards Jacob's well on the outskirts of town. She walked slowly; almost oblivious to the crowd around her as she passed the markets and shops that lined the street.

It was approaching the noon hour as she walked past the last buildings on the edge of town. This wasn't the time of day that women usually went to the well to draw water for their homes. Normally, they would go in the early morning or early evening hours. Going to the well was an occasion for friends to socialize and talk about their families or catch up on the latest gossip.

She always planned her daily trips to the well when she knew that few, if any, would be there. She had long been the topic of much of the gossip. She had a past. Married five times and now simply living with a man. That was enough to fuel anyone's gossip fire. The years of hardship had begun to make her heart as hard as the well-trodden path beneath her feet.

With her thoughts a hundred miles away from the routine task at hand, she hadn't noticed the stranger sitting in the shade beside the well. It wasn't until she was right up to the well that she saw him. Somewhat startled, she quickly came back to reality. "Make no eye contact and no conversation," she may have said to herself. The stranger looked up and gave her a pleasant smile as she placed her water pot on the ground near the well's opening. "Why did he have to be here," she thought, partly embarrassed at having been startled by his presence.

John 4:2 tells us that Jesus and His disciples were traveling north out of Judea, heading for the region of Galilee. Typically, Jews would not travel through Samaria when they made this journey. They would stay as far to the east as possible and avoid going into Samaria all together. Verse 4 would have answered her question as to why He was there. It simply says, "***Now He had to go through Samaria.***"

That doesn't mean there was no other way to get to His destination in Galilee. It means that His detour through the region of Samaria is part of God's agenda for His ministry. To put it another way, this Samaritan woman was penciled into God's divine day planner and Jesus is keeping the appointment. He HAD to go through Samaria.

Verse 7 tells us it was Jesus who initiated the conversation.

“Give me a drink.” It was a simple request. An affirming nod of her head would have sufficed, or she could have simply said "okay." But, the years of hardship had taken their toll. Perhaps she was surprised at how biting her answer was. Her reply to his request for a drink of water is in verse 9.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

She may have winced slightly at the tone of her harsh answer. "Give the man a drink," she thought, "get your water and go home." She had no way of knowing that this stranger's compassion for her ran far deeper than the well from which she drew water.

There was an awkward silence as her words echoed through her mind. She gave the stranger a quick glance. His pleasant smile remained and He didn't appear to be offended in the least by her abrupt tone.

We see Jesus' response in verse 10.

10 Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”

She tried to sound more courteous and not take out the years of hurt and anger on the stranger by the well. Her response was less biting and leaned toward a modicum of respect though there was a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

11 The woman said to Him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?”

“Ugh...why am I engaging in conversation with this stranger,” she may have thought. “Just pull up a bucket of water and give him a drink and go home.”

What she has yet to realize is she is not in charge of this scene; she is right on time for her appointment. She is also about to find out the answer to her question, “are you greater than our father Jacob,” is an affirming “YES!”

The One who set the time and place for this meeting with her, begins His answer to her question.

13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

She had not understood the full impact of His words, but the thought of being rid of the monotonous routine of coming to this well everyday appealed to her.

15 The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.”

There really isn’t anything spectacular about this scene from the pages of scripture. No miracle to wow an on looking crowd. Just a conversation between Jesus and a woman from the region of Samaria engaged in her daily routine.

This is characteristic of our God. In his search for true worshipers, He often finds them in the routine chores of everyday life. The mother standing at the sink washing the same dishes for the umpteen thousandth time... The person on the assembly line installing that part on a seemingly endless line of components...

The man traveling down the same road to work for the last twenty years... A young mother changing a diaper for the third time in the last twenty minutes.

I would never want to devalue the importance of worshiping our Lord in the assembly with other Believers, but I wonder if many are missing the joy of worshiping the Lord in the midst of the routine of daily life. God is in that as well. He meets us there and desires our attention. It is in those moments of our day that the truest form of worship can take place. No music to set the mood, no one to impress. Nothing to inhibit us from expressing our love for him. Just you and God.

In the midst of the drudgery of getting yet another pot of water from the local well, she encounters Jesus. He was waiting for her. He HAD to be there. He was on a mission to find a woman that desperately needed what only He could supply “...living water.”

When we choose to worship in the midst of our routine, the routine can become extraordinary.

- Sing at the sink.
- Pray as you drive to work (*make sure you watch and pray*).
- Thank Him in the midst of a thankless routine. It will become anything but drudgery.

Jesus said that the Father is seeking those who worship that way.

Just some Food For Thought... That will be continued

~ Pastor Frank

