

Compassion

Series: None

September 5, 2010

Scripture

John 4:1-26

1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, **2** although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. **3** When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. **4** Now he had to go through Samaria. **5** So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" **8** (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.^[a])

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

17 "I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. **18** The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. **20** Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this

mountain nor in Jerusalem. **22** You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. **23** 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. **24** God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

25 The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

26 Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

Engage

What thoughts come to your mind when you hear the word "compassion"?

Discuss

1. When we have true compassion, it moves us to action. Share a time when you have had compassion that moved you to action. Is there a time you haven't acted and wished that you had? What kept you from acting?
2. Our student ministry is participating in fund-raising for an organization called Charity Water that places wells in villages where people don't have fresh water or have to walk miles for it. Five thousand dollars provides a well for one village. So far they have raised over \$18,000 and have a goal of putting wells in four villages. Charity Water will provide the GPS location of the villages where our wells will be located.
3. Compassion risks reputation. Often when we step out to help someone, people will question why we spend our money, time or other resources on such an endeavor. Or maybe they will question the worth of the people who are the recipients of our gift. God calls us to recognize all people as people for whom Jesus loves and died for. What causes us to have prejudice against the poor or against particular ethnic groups. (Sometimes we assume people can help themselves if they work hard. In reality, people in depressed economies cannot help themselves regardless of their commitment to work hard. Some of these people spend hours a day just providing clean water for their families. They work hard but don't have the opportunity to have success financially.)
4. Jesus lived to please one person. Are we too concerned with pleasing people or fitting into the norm of others in North America? What would it take for us to take a bold stand for our beliefs or for helping people?
5. In the focus passage, Jesus had compassion on the woman. He went out of his way, walking many extra miles to have the opportunity to talk with her. How far out of your way are you willing to go to meet the need of someone in need?
6. Compassion points to the gospel. The woman at the well had spiritual needs. Sometimes when we meet physical needs, people are open to have their spiritual needs met. How comfortable do you feel to meet spiritual needs? What can we do to be ready to help people find Christ?

7. We should never underestimate the impact of one act of compassion. We never know what God is going to do with it. How can we be sensitive to the little things God calls us to do? Can you share a time when you felt led of God to do a small act of compassion?

Challenge

Plan to do one act of compassion this week. Maybe it's a need you are already aware of, or maybe you need to pray for open eyes and for God to reveal a need this week. Make a commitment now to meet that need and see what God does in and through that act. Allow God to grow your faith through that act.