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Have you ever been in a situation that just seemed downright strange to you? A situation that you'd never encountered before, and one that looked to you as if there was just something going on that was not really quite in the norm. Well, after reading this morning scripture, I'm sure that all of you understand that this was the kind of situation that Jesus. Found himself in when he arrived at Jacob's Well. So, I'd like to set the scene for you a little bit, just so we all understand everything. Picture, if you will, a long and dusty road and a man walking along that road. When you see them, it's obvious that he's already been on a long journey and then off in the distance he sees a well. Boy, does this place look good to him. The Son of God decides to rest at Jacob's Well. So, he comes to the well and sits down, and after a little while, a Samaritan woman comes walking along with her buckets to draw her daily water. Now, before I go any further, I need to tell you a couple of things about the Jews and the Samaritans. First of all, the Jews and the Samaritans were divided by religious enmity to the point where they had no dealings with each other, so for Jesus to be speaking to a Samaritan makes the scene a little strange. Secondly, Jesus Christ was speaking to a woman, and it was common to view women as either a chattel or property. They were not seen as being on par with men, so this makes the scene even stranger. The scene is set!

So, let's talk about what the issue is here. If we focus on the sin of the woman (she's had many husbands and is living with a man who is not her husband) then we miss the true and deeper issue. Sure, the woman had sin in her life just like all of us, but the real issue was not the woman. It was the Samaritan people, and the fact that they were living in spiritual ignorance. In modern terms, you could say that the two groups were living with “irreconcilable differences.”

The Samaritans chose to only accept the writings of the Pentateuch to believe as Scripture. They did not accept the writings of the prophets. They did not accept the Davidic covenant. And so, what happened because of their spiritual ignorance? They ended up worshipping outside of God's will. Spiritual ignorance led them astray. If we look back at verse 22, Jesus Christ himself is Telling them, "You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews." Now it should be stated at this point that the Samaritan woman likely didn't really understand just who it was that was speaking to her because Jesus had not been revealed to her yet as the Messiah, but that was coming very soon. In the conversation that they're having Christ is making it plain to the Samaritan woman, and through her to the Samaritan people that their spiritual ignorance has led them astray because they worship what they do not know. Irreconcilable differences! Their sin separated them from God.

Now of course you're going to question and ask, what does this mean for us today? It's a nice story about how Jesus talked to the woman at the well, but how does that affect our lives? Well, sadly, the same problems exist here in society today. As human beings, we still allow spiritual ignorance to separate us from God! It could be that our life is too busy or my work is just being too hard on me right now, or I just don't want to hear about all that churchy stuff from you religious people. And for those of us here in the church today, there's really no avoiding it either. It's very easy for us to become so comfortable with our traditions that we are quite prepared to miss out entirely on the incredible gift that Jesus Christ offers to us and provides for us. Now, don't get me wrong. I don't believe that there is anything at all wrong with the traditions that our church holds. They are ancient and they are drawn from Scripture. They are wonderful and for many they provide an anchor for their faith. What I am saying is that since they are so wonderful, it is easy to get too comfortable within them. So, the question for us here today is what do we do?

For the Samaritans, even though they were separated from God, Christ came to offer them a kind of reunification. He came to be a reconciler. And how did he do this? By offering them the greatest gift that mankind could ever receive. He offered them Living Water. It becomes clear that his intention was to be a reconciler by drawing the Samaritans back into unity with God through salvation.

If we look back at verses 13 and 14, Jesus Christ said to the Samaritan woman, every one who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty. Again, the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. This is God's offer of salvation to the Samaritan people. It is the reunification that He is offering them, and He is actually offering them to be reunified with God, and it is the greatest gift that He could offer to them and to all of mankind. The Samaritan woman told Jesus that she looked for the Messiah, and his response was to tell her that He was the one she was looking for, and this made clear the path of reconciliation. The path both was and is through Him, the Living Water.

So what does this mean for us today? Jesus Christ came not only to reconcile the Samaritans to the Father, but He also came to reconcile each and every one of us to Him as well. Our salvation, just like that of the Samaritans, is through Jesus Christ because He is the living water and because He has given us the gift of faith, we can worship the Father in spirit and in truth as He has laid out in His Word. The last point I'm going to make today is that if we as Christians in the Lutheran Church have grown so comfortable in our faith that we can miss out on the great gifts that Christ provides for us, we simply need to be reminded that Jesus is the Living Water and that while we continue in faith, we will continuously be reconciled to God. The greatest gift that humanity has ever received, Salvation, has been given to us through Jesus Christ the Reconciler.

The Samaritans were lost in sin and worshipping God wrongly because of their spiritual ignorance, but Jesus came to be a reconciler to them

and reunite them with the Father. He evangelized them through the woman at Jacob's Well, and his evangelism had a reconciliatory effect because she went off into the neighboring town and told others that they should come and see this man and determine if he could be the Christ. Now I know that many among you have been believers for a long time, but even with long-time belief it is easy to fall into the habit of getting comfortable in our faith. What we need to remember is quite simple. The gift of Living Water who is Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ went to the cross, died for our sins, and rose from the grave so that we could be reconciled with God. Our sin, which some might call spiritual ignorance, had separated us from God but his son Jesus Christ shed his own blood to pay the price to reunite us with the Father.

Now, if there is someone among us here who doesn't know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Jesus came to save you. He came to be a reconciler and reunite you with God. The salvation that he offered to the Samaritan people was the greatest gift they could receive, and He offers all of us that same Salvation now and today.