

1 Sentence Testimony

Making Witnessing Easier—part 4

Day 1: “Managing” our life to avoid inescapable pain

1. There is a hole in our lives so deep, a longing so great that can only be quenched by one thing. That is God himself.
2. But we pursue almost anything else. We crave immediate fulfillment. But the hole inside us isn't satisfied like we imagine. We idealize whatever person, event, future goal, or thing that “promises” lasting fulfillment. At best we are satisfied for a very short time, and then the search begins again, again, and again, etc.
3. But maybe that longing for more isn't a bad feeling but a necessary one, designed inside of us to keep us running back to the one who can fill us. What if that longing we try desperately to fill is our daily reminder to keep seeking God.
4. Let the longing be the reminder to go and get filled! The Samaritan Woman's story gives us a lot to learn.
5. The Samaritan woman scheduled her day to avoid some of her deepest pain.

John 4:4-9 And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, tired from his journey, sat beside the well. It was noon.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria.”

6. The Samaritan woman, who found herself drinking at the well with the Savior of the world, frequented this well at this hour on purpose. Samaria was a desert town and the heat of the day was not the time to be filling up the jars of water.

7. But she did this. *She planned her day to escape the pain of her shame.* To avoid running into the other people of the village. Drawing water alone in the heat of the day could only indicate one thing. She was a social outcast.

8. Yet Jesus found her there.

9. Attempting to avoid pain, trying to “manage” our world to avoid pain, and living with a pain just below the surface of what anyone can see. Does that sound familiar to you?

10. What strikes you from today's devotional?

Day 2: Engage, ask questions, go deeper

1. Her story reminds me of how “easy” it is to live with certain level of pain, with the assumption that there is nothing we can do about it, except try to “manage” it.

2. She felt like she didn’t deserve to be treated any differently by her townspeople. She had made too many big-time mistakes. Everybody knew her relational failures and her moral failures.

John 4:9-12 “The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria? 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.”

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

3. He will continue to engage her in conversation even though Jews didn’t initiate conversations with women, not did Jews converse with the “hated” Samaritans.

Jesus, the Savior of the world, asks an outcast to help him.

4. During the previous weeks we have talked about engaging with people and asking them questions. Here it is, by asking for her help.

5. What we know from the story we’ve read so far and the rest of the story, is that Jesus values this woman in spite of her past. (Re-read that sentence!)

6. Here are several simple principles:

- a. No one is ever too far gone.
- b. He has a purpose for each of us.
- c. He’ll never let us be alone.
- d. He is always right there.

7. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 3:

1. Let's look back at Jesus' response to her question about Him even talking to her.

John 4:10 "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."

2. Did He answer her question about why He was talking with her, which was so counter-cultural?

3. Instead of answering her question He changes the subject. Jot down as many observations from verse 10 as you can.

4. His response is suggestive of several things:

a. He referenced water, but He put a twist on the kind of water they were talking about.

b. He put a twist on who would ask for a drink of water. Originally, he asked. Now He suggests that she ask.

c. He mentions God for the first time in the conversation, but very indirectly.

d. He suggests something about Himself.

e. He suggests that there is something He can do for her. As to us witnessing, this would be suggesting something Jesus has done for us.

5. Yet, His response was "short and sweet," no lectures, no superiority, no inferred coming down on her. He is relational, with a purpose.

6. I hope there is at least one light bulb going on for you regarding witnessing. As you think about witnessing to someone, what strikes you from Jesus' response to her?

7.

Day 4:

SHE RECEIVED

Jesus offered the living water.

She stayed with Jesus long enough to see him. She didn't just gaze over the surface, but she inquired, and she was open to change. Maybe even more important is the fact that Jesus stayed and showed her he had what she had been looking for all along.

That cry of her heart, that unmet expectation, that anxiety that sat under the surface, that stirring in her heart and that thirst she could never quench could all change in an instant.

“Everyone 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.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”

John 4:13-15

Jesus offered, He's always offering. That is one thing that we know. He offers us all salvation, truth, filling, and a place to never thirst again. The question is will we receive it?

The giving of Jesus is a guarantee. *The receiving on our end is the stumbling block.*

Receiving is hard. Especially when we believe we're too far gone. Perhaps you had faith enough to receive salvation, but you're struggling to have faith enough to advance it.

But, receiving is not a destination. It's an action. A daily choice that we never cease to do. It's in the receiving that our satisfaction is quenched.

You're designed to crave. You're designed to have a longing that feels like a fire in your soul that drives you daily back to receive the only filling that can satisfy that desire. But on the flip side, maybe it's the filling that gives you the longing to go out and share the good news?

Day 5:

SHE DESIRED TO GO AND DO.

This is perhaps the point that gets me the most pumped up. But lets read the verse, so you know what I'm talking about:

“So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” They went out of the town and were coming to him....

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there for two days. And many more believed because of his word.”

John 4:28-42

When the woman believed, she immediately ran off to tell others. The filling not only filled her longing, but it gave her a new desire to use the energy to go out and live her purpose. To share the gospel, to become disciples.

The woman at the well is an example of love, truth, redemption, and acceptance.

This is the story I pray for you. that Jesus a place of love, truth, redemption, and acceptance. A place where you can come and get filled so you can go out and do and live your God-given purpose.

We are not designed to fill from an empty cup, for when we run dry, we reach for an easy and often temporary source of comfort.

But choosing to live filled, to receive His filling daily allows that to overflow into all aspects of your life.

Taking what can quickly and easily become a legalistic concept of doing and put it back into its intended design—*to be an act of daily grace*.

The longing may never go away here on earth, but let that longing be a reminder to come and get filled. And in the filling, may you have the energy to go out and live your God-given design.

Creating a life well-lived is found in Christ alone. Let him do the work. Let him be your healer and your guide. Come back to him daily, for he is the living well, and He alone allows you to live well.

Get filled, and may you never thirst again.

Extra material:

She was curious about his promises, and He didn't back away no matter how deep her sin ran through. He's here waiting for us to do the same. He doesn't see how deep your sin, *He sees your heart*. He sees your purpose and the beauty in which he created you. There is no running from Him no matter how hard you try. Jesus is always there.

So I wonder what would happen if you sat for a while? What if you sit in his presence? You came a little closer, and you asked those questions for yourself. Crack the surface open and allow him space to fill, which can only come with staying.

When you stay, you can be filled.