

## **Faith in the Home**

### **Third Sunday of Lent, John 4:5-42 "The Calling of the Outcast"**

I still can remember what it was like in elementary school to in a line with my friends while two "team captains" took turns picking who would be on their team for our touch football games. If there was an odd number of guys there was someone who ultimately would not be picked. If there was an even number of guys where everyone could play, everyone knew that people picked first were known as the best players, and the guys picked last were not. Has much changed since growing up?

In any group of people, no one wants to be last. No one wants to be the butt of every joke, no wants to be the one who is gossiped about, and everyone wants to contribute some value to someone somewhere. No one desiring to be accepted wants to be an outcast.

Yet, today's story is about one of the most famous outcasts in recorded history. She doesn't have a known name from Scripture, but she is well known as the "woman at the well." Her well-known story begins when she encounters Jesus who took a route through Samaria, and rested at well that was dug by Israel's forefather Jacob. She came to that well in the middle of the heat of the day in order to avoid contact with the other women in the town, who came to draw water when it was cooler. So, it is traditionally interpreted that she was not well regarded among the other women, and the towns people. She was a loner. She was an outcast. A feeling that most of us can relate to from one time or another.

When Jesus asks her to, "draw up some water" for Him to drink, she is shocked. Why would a Jew, ask her, a Samaritan for anything? Samaritans were thought as inbred half-breeds by the Jews. Are we not also in a time where the prevailing culture is hyper-focused on racial identity. Yet, Jesus initiates a conversation with her in order to introduce her to the "living water" that only He supplies. Finally, when Jesus tells the woman to, "Go, and call your husband." She confesses that she has no husband, and Jesus confirms that she is right and even shares His divine knowledge of her by showing that He knows about all five of her previous husbands and that she was living with a sixth man now who she wasn't even married to. Regardless, of the circumstances of each of her divorces this is a broken woman. Today, when we look out how our society treats marriage verses what God's will is for marriage we see a broken culture filled with broken people. Perhaps, you know the pain and the brokenness of going through a divorce yourself. This woman is someone who many in our culture can relate to. Yet,

Jesus chooses to share His "living water with her" and reveals to her that He is the Christ, the Messiah.

He wants to do the same for all outcasts everywhere. Furthermore, Jesus raises this woman up to share the Gospel. Out of excitement she runs to the town not afraid of her status but overjoyed to share the news of Jesus. The townspeople believe her, and come to see Jesus. On her account of Jesus many believe that He is the Messiah. What we can take from this is that regardless of your sins, your social status, or how our culture "categorizes" you, Jesus loves you, and has a purpose for you. That is why you know that He is the Messiah because He chose you to believe in Him. You may have been or currently are an outcast in some circle in this world, but because of Jesus' love for you, you are not an outcast of His Kingdom. He died for you, so that you can drink His living water. He rose for you so that you would rise with Him after your own death. Not only does He value you, but He can give you value to others in this world, as well.

### **How do we teach and model this to our children?**

1. Kids are kids. They are going to have times where they may feel like an outcast, or "uncool." Even if they act as if they don't want you, "the uncool parent," to share how much you love them. Do it. They need to hear it. Share the Gospel with them. Let them know that Jesus loves them too.
2. When they sin. Forgive them as Christ forgives you. The "woman at the well" was not righteous in how she was living when she met Jesus. However, Jesus still offered her the Gospel.
3. It's a no brainer that we want our kids to include everyone. That said, they are watching and listening to us. We need to be careful about how we speak about others in our homes. They are listening and learning from us. If we talk about others behind their back, they will feel justified when they do the same.
4. Remember that Jesus loves you. With you God is well pleased. From that truth, His love will flow from you into your home.