

Sermon: February 24, 2008
“When my well runs dry”

Where do you go when your well runs dry??

Where do you go ... to whom do you turn ----- when you need some fresh perspective, and maybe a new lease on life??

When hope has run dry ... when you don't think you have the strength to face another day ... where do you turn??

*Do you sit by the fire ... with your footy-pajamas on ... sippin' on a bit of brandy?

*Do you escape to your tree-fort? ... put on your ipod and listen to old sermons!@!!

*Call a good friend? ... stop by the ever-vanishing neighborhood tavern and spin a few yarns??

*Go to church on a Thursday night??

Yes ... where is it that you go ... to whom do you turn ----- to get re-connected with the very essence of life and your own soul??

I love the story in the gospel lesson this morning ---- the meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. “Samaritans” are the outcasts ... they are not “pure enough.” They are on the outside lookin' in!!

We need to understand ... in 2008 ... this story isn't just about a Samaritan woman ... it's about us!!

I'm sure each of us has times ... when we are modern-day Samaritans ---- “on the outside looking in.”

Sometimes when I go to clergy meetings ... I feel like an outsider ... not sure why, but I do.

You can go to a family gathering and feel like you don't belong. When I go to a wedding or funeral at another church ... there are times when I don't feel welcome.

Maybe when you walked into All Saints for the first time ... everyone is talking ... lots of noise ... but you walk in and no one seems to notice you ---- it can happen, even here.

You show up to work on your first day ... and everyone gives you “the look.”

You walk into a public place ... your skin is scarred, you have no legs and one arm ... like our friend Dorian at Heartland ----- and people look at you like you are from another planet.

(Don't do this to Dorian ... he might just bop you upside-down the head!@!!)

Your life has hit the skids ... people are talking about you ... you've made a couple wrong turns ----- and you wonder if you will ever “belong” again.

You can spend so much of your time battling --- from insurance companies to cancer --- that you just want to hide and never come out!

The Samaritan lady goes to the well and meets Jesus ... she is embarrassed.

Her religion isn't “pure” ... she's been married 5 times ... people shun her. Jesus asks her for a drink of water.

She doesn't feel worthy.

Jesus says ----- *It's ok. You give me water to drink. Now I have something for you.*

It's called LIVING WATER --- water of acceptance, hope, and new life.

This is precisely why Jesus has come into the world.

Not to build churches ... not to give people phony rules about who's saved and who's not.

Jesus didn't intend to start religions and create jobs for preachers.

JESUS HAS COME ----- *so we can be re-connected with the power of life's goodness and grace!!*

The Samaritan woman is YOU and ME.

She doesn't deserve to be forever defined by her mistakes ... and the times in life where she has fallen short.

Like us ----- she needs to be defined by her spirit ... her hopes and dreams ... her soul ... and the gifts she has to share.

I remember the first time Jude and I went to Heartland Children's Home. Pam and Joe had always told us ----
"You have to go ... and see what it's like!!"

Our first visit was when I officiated at the funeral of Dawn's sister Amy. I remember sitting in their little cemetery ... placing Amy's ashes into the ground ----- "earth to earth ... ashes to ashes ... and dust to dust."

Afterwards we walked around ... saw all these kids ----- fragile, some abused, most very dependent.

It's been 11 years ... we go there ... they come here. Our hearts and souls are so inter-twined.

And, of course Jude and I wake up everyday ---- with a "little hunk of Heartland" down the hall.

His name is QUINTON.

If there is one message our friends from Heartland help us learn ... along with our friends from St. Coletta's ...
and even our young friends from the past, like Adam and Amy ...

Yes, they teach us ----- we should never be defined by what we cannot do.

Too often this is what happens ... oh, you can't walk? ... you can't speak? ... you got cut from the team? ...
you didn't make it? ... didn't get accepted to the school of your choice???

LIFE IS NOT ABOUT WHAT WE CANNOT DO ... IT'S ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO!!

It's our spirit.

It's our soul.

It's our dreams and work ethic.

People can speak loudly, without words.

People can walk, without legs.

People can bring us hope ... when others don't give us a chance.

So WHERE DO YOU GO, FOR LIVING WATER??
WHERE DO YOU GO, FOR HOPE & GOODNESS & GRACE??
WHERE DO YOU GO, WHEN THE WELL HAS RUN DRY??

Sometimes ----- you just gotta look inside.

Out of gas?????? ... just turn in.

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