

Devotion, third Week of Lent, March 3, 2024
Rev. Jeanne Simpson

The reading for the third week of Lent is John 4:1-14. “Eternal life,” a key concept in John’s Gospel, refers not just to life after death but to a rich quality of life available now in relationship to God in Christ — life that partakes of the goodness and joy of life with God that is full and enduring. Fullness of life, symbolized by the vivid imagery of living water, is God’s intent for us in the present, as well as the future. The Samaritan woman is our first real witness to this saving, living water. After a very intelligent discussion about theology with Jesus, she runs back to the village to spread the good news – to be a disciple.

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John” (although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized), he left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) 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, “Lord, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”

May this week be one where you remember the living water you received at your baptism as we ponder the incredible life of our Savior and his saving grace that he freely offers to each of us.

Jeanne