

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

I WILL GIVE YOU LIVING WATER | RED LETTER TALKS PART 2

AARON BROCKETT | MARCH 9, 2025

Put our hands together and express our appreciation for Cody being willing to share his story. And if you are brand new around here, man, that's what we're all about—seeing people's lives get radically changed by meeting Jesus.

Cody referred to this Awaken journey. And if you're brand new to our church our Awaken journey is a two-year vision/generosity initiative that is really a discipleship journey. And if you're looking to check out more about Awakening you can go to our website and get all of the information there. We'd love to have you jump on board for what God is doing around here.

If you have a Bible right now go ahead and meet me in John, chapter 4. John, chapter 4 is where we will be. I hope you brought a Bible with you today.

I want to just give a big shout out to everybody joining us across all of our locations around our city and anybody tuning in online around the country. And for those of you who decided to come for the very first time, I've already met a few of you today, would you just receive this warm applause from all of us as a welcome. We're so glad that you are here. We really are. We mean that.

And my hope and desire for you—the only thing I want from you today is that I hope you have an encounter with God and hear something from Him. In addition to that I hope that you will not leave this place without saying Hi or having some sort of interaction with someone. So, maybe it's a friendly face in the auditorium or around you, somebody out in the lobby, a campus pastor.

If you are here at Northwest, I'd love to get a chance to meet you, talk to you, and pray over you. I usually hang out right after the service right down here, my left, your right. I'd love to get a chance to meet you. I've already met so many people today.

Before we get rolling, I just want to celebrate a couple of things. Number one: last weekend our Downtown campus celebrated eight years of ministry. Come on, man. Eight years, that's hard to believe. There is a whole story around that and how that took shape. I don't have time to get into it. I'll share it another time. But it is amazing what God is doing at our Downtown location.

Campus Pastor, Kyle Riley, and that whole team are doing just an incredible job. Every time I go down there I'm just so blessed and encouraged by everybody who makes



Downtown their home. And, as of last Sunday, they celebrated 800 baptisms in the last eight years of ministry. They've seen 800 people go all in. It's amazing to see that.

Speaking of baptisms, last week across all of our locations we had 171 baptisms. About 25 or so we knew ahead of time were going to happen, so that's about 150 people who had a sudden moment and it was a powerful thing to take shape.

I just need you to know that as a leadership, we are praying and trusting that God would allow us to see 1,001 baptisms this year. Now we're already somewhere between three and four hundred for the year so we've gotten off to a good start.

But we're trusting God 1,001. And you might be like, "Why 1,001?" Well, to remind us that there is always one more. And we want you to be praying for your one and your one more as well.

On Easter weekend we're going to be running it back. We're going to be having baptisms at all of our locations. Here at Northwest, we're going to be replacing that big black box with a big, beautiful baptistery. That's a lot of "B"s. It's going to be amazing. And we can't wait to take that for a run on Easter.

Well, last week we kicked off this series of messages that we will be in through Easter called Red Letter Talks. Really what red letter talks means is (many of you know this) if you have a red-letter edition Bible, the red letters signify that these are the very words of from Jesus.

Now, the reason why that is important is that these aren't just words about Jesus, it's not just what others heard Him say or saw Him do, and there is certainly a time and a place for all of that. But these are words directly from Jesus Himself.

The reason why this is so significant is because Jesus did not say He was just another prophet, Jesus didn't just say He was another good guy teaching us moral examples, Jesus said of Himself that He was God in the flesh.

He also said something else. He said, "If you want to know what God is like, then hang around with Me. Listen to what I say. Watch what I do and that will show you what God is like because I'm God in the flesh.

So, we are looking at some of these things that Jesus directly said and the primary reason why, as your pastor, is I don't want you to just know about God. If that's all that you get from my preaching, however long God has you in this church, then I've failed.

I don't you to just know about God, I want you to know Him. And there is a difference between the two. A lot of people know about God, that doesn't mean that they know God or have had an encounter with God. We want to be listening to these words directly from Jesus and these dialogues that Jesus has.



Now, the best way to really get to know somebody is not to go creeping on them on social media. The best way to get to know somebody isn't to slide into their DMs. Alright? The best way to get to know somebody is to have a conversation with them. Would you not agree? Just eye ball to eye ball—we're kind of losing that art in this world of texting and DMing.

And I'm not against any of those things. But we're going to lose our ability to have a conversation—a two-way conversation. Where we can look at each other in the eyes and know what questions to ask and it helps us to know one another.

The reason why I'm bringing that up is because in the gospel of John, John's gospel is—if you're thinking about it like a house—framed around seven key conversations that Jesus has with just regular, ordinary people not so different than you and me. And it establishes the way that God relates to all of us. It shows us what the experience of meeting Jesus and interacting with Jesus is.

In other words, when you read about Jesus and Nicodemus, when you read about Jesus and the woman at the well the way that you read the text is you read yourself into it and you put yourself in their sandals so to speak. And you're trying to be like, "Okay, what would Jesus say to me? And we read these encounters as if they were happening to us because behind each of these people we catch glimpses of ourselves.

Now, not all conversations are created equal. Would you not agree? I've read that the average number of conversations that a typical person has during a day is dozens. That varies upon your personality type and how you are wired up and what you do for a living. But, on average, dozens of conversations every day, which equals hundreds of conversations each week, which equals thousands of conversations every year.

I don't know about you guys, but I rarely remember all of the conversations I had yesterday let alone like 48 years' worth of conversations. But here's the thing. Out of all of the conversations that I've had in my life, there are a handful I will never forget because they were pivotal moments, and you've likely had those conversations too.

In fact, maybe you can just recall a few key conversations that have really kind of shaped who you are, where you are headed, what you've become—maybe you had a coach or a teacher or a mentor or a parent or a family member just speak words of life and encouragement and hope into you. They called things out in you that you didn't even know existed in you and it was life changing.

But not all crucial conversations are encouragement. I can think of painful conversations where the person confronted me and admonished me and reprimanded me and it was painful, but it was still life changing. And I will never forget them. Now, with a little bit of retrospect, I can look back and be grateful for the conversations.

Our passage today just might be one of the most significant conversations that Jesus ever had, not just in the gospel of John, but throughout His whole life and ministry. The reason why I think I can make that big of a statement is for a couple of reasons.

Number One: The result of the conversation. This woman's life gets dramatically changed in an instant.

But the other is that this is the first person that Jesus reveals Himself to as the Messiah. And here in just a minute I'm going to give you a little bit of context as to who she was and the region that they were in and why they shouldn't have even been talking to her in the first place.

And yet, Jesus chose her. He chose her to reveal Himself to her as the Messiah. This entire conversation really is a snapshot of why Jesus came, what His message is, and what He offers to people like you and like me.

Now, at the very beginning of chapter 4, Jesus is getting ready to go on another road trip. So, John provides a little bit of context for that. We're just going to jump in right here in verse 4. John puts it this way. He says:

"He," referring to Jesus, "had to go," now I want you to underline those little words in your Bible, He had to go, "through Samaria on the way. Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime." (NLT)

Now, for those of you—maybe this is your first time in our church, here's just kind of like my philosophy of preaching. I'm going to read a few verses and explain them, read a few verses, explain them, and read a few verses and explain them and then apply them and then be done. It's not rocket science.

So, what I want to do as I read these few verses of Scripture, I'm going to provide a little phrase, and I just encourage you to jot these down.

Here's the phrase I actually wrote in my Bible of this section of verses that we just read:

A Divine Detour

That's what John just described. Now, I don't know about you guys, I'm not a big fan of detours. Like you get in your car and you're going to go from point "A" to point "B" I do not like a detour because they always pop up at the most inconvenient of times. And they are time consuming.

Unfortunately, detours are just a part of life every now and then, especially in Indiana as we are emerging from wintertime. We have like three seasons: summer, winter, and road repair. That's what we have. And we just know that we have detours that are going to pop up.



Now, here's the thing about detours. We all experience them. I can't think of one time in my life where I took a detour voluntarily. I take a detour because the little guy in the orange coat is forcing me to take a detour. Take the detour or else.

The reason why I want to point that out is because John writes in the passage, "Jesus had to go through." Now there wasn't a little guy in an orange jacket forcing Him to go on this detour. Because Jesus is the Son of God He didn't had to do anything. That's bad English, but that's good theology. This is what He must do. It's what He wanted to do.

So, Jesus is in Judea. He's traveling to Galilee. And the region in between was Samaria. It is true that it existed in between the two places he was headed, but He didn't have to go through. In fact, if Jesus were to have opened up google maps and typed my road trip to Galilee, this is what likely would have happened.

I don't know if you can see it at the top half of the screen, they've got walking, camel, and donkey. Those would have been the three options. It wasn't my idea. Don't groan. Those are the creative people. I just threw them under the bus.

And so, here's what would have happened if you would have typed it into the maps. That would have been where it would have led Jesus and most Jews at the time. It would have taken them over a detour 30 miles around Samaria. But that's not the route that Jesus went. Jesus had to go through Samaria and Sychar where this conversation with a woman at the well would take place.

So, why does John bring all this up? Why did Jesus had to go through. Well, because Jews and Samaritans despised one another. I can't even stress enough the deep, deep hatred and distain these two ethnic groups of people would have had for each other and it went both ways.

In fact, the religious leaders would oftentimes pray that Samaritans would not make it to heaven. How much do you have to hate somebody that that becomes your prayer? And the Jews referred to the Samaritans, here was the derogatory term that they used, they used the term half-breeds to describe them. And the reason why is because the Samaritans were half Jew and half Assyrian.

What went down was years before the Assyrians had invaded the nation of Israel and they took them as captives and then they began to intermingle with the Jews that they had taken captive. And they created a whole new ethnic group that became the Samaritans.

Therefore, all these years later, every Samaritan that a Jew came across was a vivid reminder of what the Assyrians had done to their relatives, even though that particular Samaritan that they are locking eyes with had nothing to do with the captivity all these years later. So, most Jews just went around Samaria. They just wanted to avoid the interaction altogether.

But Jesus had to go through it. Not because He was trying to shave 30 miles off of His trip, but because, listen, watch this, He had a divine appointment with a despised woman to make the point that nobody was irredeemable and that He and He alone can unite all people.

So, listen. What this is in the text, this distain that Jews and Samaritans had, was racism. It was prejudice. It was bigotry. And those issues still exist today. They are still problems today and have been for centuries.

The reason why I am bring this up is because it's really, really important that we identify this in the text and just like the men of Issachar in 1 Chronicles, chapter 12, who understood the times in which they lived so that way they knew what Israel should do, as a church, we need to understand the times in which we live, therefore we know how to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

If you've been under my teaching for any time at all, you've heard me say these things about Satan. The primary thing is that Satan is a counterfeit. God is the Creator. Satan is a counterfeit. He doesn't have an original bone in his body. He counterfeits the good things that God creates. You've heard me say that. Right?

Three of you. Awesome. Awesome.

So, the other thing that Satan does is he is a deceiver. The Bible calls him the father of lies. So, he's really, really crafty at that. He's an accuser. So, what he will do is he will get you to think that your sin is your identity. He'll accuse you. Jesus calls you into repentance. That's the difference.

Here's the other thing that I want you to know. Satan subverts what God creates. Satan subverts what God creates. What do I mean by that? Here's a definition of subvert:

To undermine, to destabilize, to overthrow something that is established, especially by working secretly or indirectly from within.

He is subversive. This is so important for us to understand. It's subtle. It's gradual. It's behind enemy lines, meaning that we are his enemies. So, he gets behind enemy lines and he begins to just gently kind of subvert the good things God created.

Some examples of this:

One of the very first things is He created male and female, and He called it good. Adam and Eve, two different genders, and He said, "These genders complement one another to glorify me." Satan subverts that and creates tension between the genders and now we have chauvinism, and we've got feminism.

He knows that God created marriage and the family. That's His deal. Right there in the Garden. They are the building blocks of society and human thriving. Listen, man. The way to bring down a church is not through persecution on the outside. Satan knows that

the way to bring down a church is to sneak behind enemy lines and aim for the marriages and blow up the families. So, he subverts them.

God calls us to repent. Satan subverts that and says, “No, tolerance is the highest virtue.” Here’s the deal. Justus is God’s thing. Christians should care about justice more than anyone else because God does. We can go to Micah, chapter 6, verse 8. We can go to Isaiah, chapter 1, verse 17. We could go to Psalm, chapter 82, verses 3 through 4.

Now, listen. The world is led by the spirit of the age, not the Holy Spirit—by the way, you’re only led by one of them it’s either the Holy Spirit or the spirit of the age. The world wants to push a lot of different solutions to the injustice that we see that are not of God. Yet the answer and the solution can’t be found because it’s of God.

And we are still in this predicament. It’s not getting solved because there is only one solution. Jesus said, “I had to go through Samaria.” That’s the solution. It is Jesus and the unifying message of the gospel. That is the only lasting solution to the injustice that we see, because underneath the skin issues of racism, so to speak, is a sin issue that can only be resolved by the gospel of King Jesus.

Man, He had to go. He had to go. And while He is there, I love that John chooses to include that Jesus was tired and weary, because He is God in the flesh. He’s there sitting by this well. And He’s tired. And John says, verse 7:

“Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, ‘Please give me a drink.’ He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.” So Costco run.

“The woman was surprised,” I bet she was, “for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, ‘You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?’” (NLT)

Write this little phrase down, here’s what this is. This is:

A Surprising Conversation

There are two big reasons why they shouldn’t be talking. Number one: she was a Samaritan. We’ve already established Jews and Samaritans hated each other. Number two: she was a woman, and Jesus was a man, and men didn’t speak to women in public if they were outside of their family.

And so, she is just totally shocked that He would say anything to her. I like how The Message paraphrases her reaction in verse 9. The Message is sort of like an everyday vernacular. The Message says:

“The Samaritan woman, [was] taken aback...”

And I'm like, that's putting it way too mildly. I think she was annoyed. I think she was irritated. I think she was on edge, maybe even angry.

I don't know how many of you have this spiritual gift, for you "E" on the gas tank is not like empty, it's just a suggestion. It's like, "I'm going to wait until it hits "F" for fumes. That's what I'm going to do." I don't know if any of you are like that.

Let's just say if you are a female, by yourself, after dark and it hit "F" for fumes, "I've got to get gas." You pull into a gas station. It's not a really great place to be at night, I don't care who you are, let alone a female, by yourself. You get out, you're pumping gas, and a strange man starts walking across the parking lot toward you. And he asks, "Hey, could you buy me a bottle of water?"

Now, I don't know what is crossing your mind. I'm hoping that you are reaching for can of mace. That's what I'm hoping that you're doing. Who am I kidding? This is Indiana. Some of you ladies are packing. And you know who you are. We know who you are.

Maybe you don't have mace, and you aren't packing, but maybe you're putting your keys in your fingers like home-made brass knuckles. I don't know. I don't think it's going to work. Maybe that's the best that you've got.

That's what is happening here. This is the equivalent. She is shocked that He would talk to her. Why? Well, John points out that it was noontime. I don't know if you caught that little detail. Why did he tell us what time of day it was? Who cares what time of day it is? It actually says everything.

Now, it's the Middle East. So, it's the hottest part of the day in one of the hottest regions of the world. And this is during a time when they had no running water. So, you would gather water usually in the morning. That's when 99.9 percent of women went to gather water. Two reasons: it was the cool of the day, and number two: you needed water in the morning that would last you all day long.

There is actually a third reason. As the people would gather at the well... They didn't have cell phones, they didn't have social media, they didn't have any sort of technology that would keep them connected. This was the technology that kept the community connected. So, you would stand in a single file line waiting for your turn to get your water for the day.

And while you were standing in line, guess what you are doing? You're talking. What's the latest? And so they were just kind of giving everybody an update of what is going on in their lives. I'm sure there was a little bit of gossip mingled in there.

So, this is talk radio, this is news channels, this is social media, this is checkout lane tabloids all rolled into one at the daily meeting at the well, unless you came at noon. If you came at noon, that's because you were the tabloid.

And she likely came at noon, not because she accidentally slept in. It was intentional. She didn't want to talk to anybody. She was tired of being gossiped about. So, now she comes in the middle of the day, probably like she normally did, and by that time of day there is nobody at the well. So, it's great. She could just do her business and leave.

And now, I'm sure, that she saw this male Jew sitting beside the well as soon as she came around the corner it was like, "Too late." They've already locked eyes. She can't walk away. Her question to Him is a very indirect way of saying, "Buddy, you better buzz off. Get lost." And Jesus replied in verse 10:

"If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." (NLT)

Here's what Jesus is giving her. He is giving her:

An Unexpected Offer

Do you notice, in verse 10, Jesus said something really unusual. He says, "If you only knew the gift God has for you." He didn't say, "If you'd only received the gift God has for you."

Now, why does He say it that way? Because the gift of God is not an object, the gift of God is a person. You receive an object, but you know a person. So, in other words, what He is saying is, "If you really knew who God has sent you, you would be asking Him for living water. And you know what? I'd give it to you."

And her reply, in verse 11, she gets really, really pragmatic here:

"But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket...and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" (NLT)

Can you just hear a little bit of an edge in her tone? The ground that they are standing on has history and the well is essential to that history. It's Jacob's well. This well has been providing physical H₂O for generations and notice Jesus' reply:

"Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life." (NLT)

For the first time, her defenses begin to come down:

"Please, sir... give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water." (NLT)

Do you hear what she is saying? I won't have to come here and be humiliated day after day after day in my isolation. This was:

An Irresistible Proposition

And as noted by her response here you can tell how thirsty she is. And I'm not just talking about for a drink. I'm talking about something much, much deeper than that. She is spiritually and emotionally and relationally parched.

Jesus has now identified her thirst, and that's what He'll do. He'll always do it. He will do it with you, and He will do it with me. Once He identifies our thirst then He presses in on that source of thirst. He doesn't stop short. He's going to go to an uncomfortable place. He says to her in verse 16:

"Go and get your husband..."

"I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband—for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!" (NLT)

Now, here's what He is doing. Jesus is exposing the emptiness that she already knew was there. She'd just been hiding. He already knows it. This is the reason why she is so thirsty. Now, please understand that Jesus is not trying to embarrass or shame her. He's showing her that He truly knows her. And He always has. He's her heavenly Father.

And He's not saying this like gloating, like, "I got you," kind of a thing. He's like, "Finally, you're willing to be real with Me. You're willing to tell Me the truth. You're willing to be authentic. And I want so much more for you. I already know everything about you, you don't need to hide it. Just as long as you come clean, I'm willing to meet you right where you are."

And the woman is going to go right back to her defenses. She says:

"Sir..." verse 19, "You must be a prophet."

"I don't know how you know this about me, you must be talking to Sheila. And I'm going to have a word with Sheila because she needs to keep her mouth shut."

"You must be a prophet. I don't know how you know this about me."

So, her defenses go back up. It's what we always do:

"So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim where our ancestors worshiped?" (NLT)

She comes back with a deflection, a distraction. Instead of being humble, she's kind of like flaring up on Him. Do you see this in the text? It's what we often do when something hits a little bit too close to home. We just change the subject. We offer a complaint. It's a distraction, a smoke screen.

Listen. In 25 years of ministry I have seen it over and over and over and over and over again. I've learned to read past the comment or complaint to what might be behind it. Now, I'm not trying to read into something that is not there. But, oftentimes, what ends up happening is... Everybody receives conviction in a little bit of a different way. What she's doing here is she's picking a fight with Jesus about worship styles. Notice the irony of that.

She's like, "You Jews worship with your hymns and hymnals, but we Samaritans we like us a little Brandon Lake or Mav City." That's what she is doing. And that's how petty fights about worship styles can be. Jesus isn't fazed. He doesn't take the bait. Look at what He says in verse 21:

"Jesus replied, 'Believe me, dear woman,'" that's a sign of affection," "the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews.'" (NLT)

Now, what that means is Jesus is basically saying, "If you're God's chosen people, all the rules, all the customs, God leading us through life, we've gotten to know Him through the thick and the thin, you Samaritans haven't had that experience with Him,"

"But the time is coming—indeed it's here now," that's basically an announcement of His coming. It's here now. I am the one bridging you to God, "when true worshipers will worship the Father," not because of their background or ethnicity or because they were in the right church, but they will worship the Father, "in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." (NLT)

Here's what He is saying. You've got to watch this. If you want this living water that I speak of, then it is more than an experience that you have, and it's more than just a proposition.

I need to unpack that a little bit. It's more than an experience. It's more than a proposition. The reason why I'm saying that is because oftentimes, as believers, as Christians, we separate propositional truth from personal experience. And never the two shall meet.

It's kind of like, for some of us, depending upon the church we grew up in, depending upon our personality style, depending on the way that we are kind of wired up we are propositional truth kind of people. It's like, "Give me my books, expository preaching, ESV. I'm in two different BSF Bible studies, plus Rooted, plus some extra credit."

How many of you are propositional truth people? Yeah, you're scared to raise your hands because that's a little bit too charismatic. Propositional truth. That joke has not worked

in all three services. I think I'm stepping on some toes. I'm just going to keep right at it, man.

Hey, actually I'm a propositional truth guy. The church I grew up in, that's my love language. I feel closest to God when I'm reading a book. And you know what? I've had to learn that if that's my strong suit, I'm going to have to lean a little bit more into the Holy Spirit as well.

But there are some of us who are more like experience and emotional people. And that's great as well. You know who you are. You are the ones who show up two hours early for worship night. You're just like ready to go.

Now, here's the thing. It's not just all propositional truth and it's not all just personal experience. Those two have to come together. So, Jesus is saying in the text: Spirit and truth. Here's why. All truth without experience is oftentimes very stale if you turn it into condescension, it's the danger of missing the heart that Jesus has for people. All experience without truth is in danger of being untethered to the truth which leads to heresy. So, what we want is we want Spirit and truth.

Listen. We don't do this perfectly. It is who we aspire to be as a church. I've shared with you the Vin diagram before. The three circles of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit: The Word of God, The Movement of God, The Mission of God. So, we want to be a Word of God church that is on Mission with God—Matthew 28, Go and make disciples of all nations—but by the Spirit of God. We want to be smack dab in the middle of all of that.

And the truth is that we rightly glorify God and His created order in the Spirit, so we experience God's presence and power, because that's the only thing that is life changing.

My preaching hero of all time is a guy by the name of Martin Lloyd Jones. He was a little Welsh preacher who stood like five foot five and he preached in London during World War II. He was an expository guy, and he was a bit of a charismatic. His favorite phrase was, "Preaching is logic on fire." And I love that. It's logical and it's on fire.

Now, why does this matter? Going back to what we talked about last week, some of us maybe try to do this faith thing in the flesh, this faith thing in our own power. We love the idea of God we just don't really want to follow Him. We love the idea of going to heaven one day when we die, but it's a different thing to actually live for His kingdom in the here and now. We love the idea of Jesus being Savior. Not so much the idea of Jesus being Lord.

So, what ends up happening is that we kind of compartmentalize our lives. We're actually trying to do this faith thing in a way that Jesus never prescribed it. And then when it doesn't work, we blame Him, "God, You're like this cosmic vending machine that

is supposed to come through when I need you.” God’s like, “When have I ever told you that I would do that?”

So, what ends up happening is we find ourselves in these dry seasons. We find ourselves at the well, so to speak, and we are like, “God, You seem distant. My prayers aren’t answered. My faith seems flat. And I come to church but I’m not getting anything out of this.”

The first place that Jesus would go, He would say, “Hey, hey, hey. Listen. Listen. Listen. I want your prayers to be answered. I want your faith to grow. I want you to have the experience. I just need you to come clean first. Stop trying to bargain with Me and submit to Me every area of your life. So, before we go to an answered prayer thing, how is your thought life?” And He’s going to press in. “Hey, man. Before we go to you having this spiritual mountain top experience, are you honoring me with your body? How’s your sex life? Hey, before I grant you this deal, let’s talk about your budget, your finances. Are you honoring Me there?”

And you might be like, “Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. That’s personal.” And it is. It’s called a personal relationship. And Jesus already knows all about it anyway. He just wants you to come clean. “That’s a little bit painful.” Yeah, it is painful, but He can handle it. “It’s a little embarrassing for me to come clean on some of that stuff.” Yes, but Jesus already knows it and He still loves you and there isn’t anything you can do to out- sin the grace of God.

You are like, “Man, I would just rather kind of like show up to church with my little religious face and act like everything is great. We shouldn’t talk about those things in church.” And this is exactly the place we should be talking about those things. This is the one place where you should be fully known, fully accepted, and yet fully called to more, which is why we say that Jesus will meet you regardless of where you are, and He loves you too much leave where you are.

That is where true flourishing can be found. It’s Spirit. And we love the Spirit. We love the emotional experience. But it’s also truth. Even the truths that are inconvenient and we don’t want to hear. And Jesus gave this woman both. He loved her with an extravagant kind of love. But He still spoke hard truth into her life.

Our culture would say if we speak hard truth then you hate that person. Jesus didn’t hate her. He loved her too much to not tell her the truth. And that truth would satisfy the thirst of hers. I need you to know this. Jesus confronts her in a way that restores her dignity and makes her feel like she’s still worth saving.

Here’s today’s sermon in a sentence:

It is the intersection of extravagant love and difficult truth that brings about lasting transformation and change.



Now, as a church, the temptation is to emphasize one or the other or to emphasize one and never talk about the other. Some churches are all about extravagant love and never get to biblical truth or are all about difficult truth but never get to extravagant love.

And, as a church, we don't want to major in one and minor in the other. We want to major in both. And it's really easy to get lopsided, especially in this world that applauds for love and then thumbs down for speaking truth.

Now, I want to finish the passage because it's so good and I'm about out of time. Look with me at what it says in verse 25:

"The woman said, 'I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.'" (NLT)

Do you know what that's code for? This conversation is done. That's what that is code for. She's passively aggressively saying, "I need to get out of here." And that's when Jesus, I think he looked right at her and He says, first time ever revealing this to somebody:

"I AM the Messiah!"

Just then Larry, Curly, and Moe came back. Their timing is impeccable:

"They were shocked to find Him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, 'What do you want with her?' or 'Why are you talking to her?' The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village." (NLT)

I love that. That's the reason why she came is to get water and she left the jar by the well. Why? Because she had her thirst quenched. And I'm not talking about H₂O. And who did she tell? Three of you on the front row got it. Everyone. She told everyone. Here's her sermon:

"Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah? So the people came streaming from the village to see him." (NLT)

Man, I love this. This woman with a shady relational history and a bad reputation becomes the town's first open air preacher. She's like an evangelist. I love it.

And here was her sermon for those of you who think, "Oh, man. I could never invite somebody to church. I could never share my faith, it's too intimidating. I don't really know enough." You don't need to know enough. Here's what you need. You need the Spirit of God. You need a repentant heart. And they need to see Jesus in you. Here's your sermon: Come and see. Just come and see. Just come and see.

Now, I'm actually going to end this by taking us to the Old Testament really quickly because in Jeremiah, chapter 2, the prophet actually uses this phrase that I think Jesus

is borrowing from as He talks about this living water. Jeremiah writes this, speaking the words of God:

“For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me,” here it is, “the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!” (NLT)

So, as I wrap up, here’s the question I just want to leave you with. Are you trading living water for empty wells?

“Pastor, what are you talking about?” Well, in our day and age we don’t call them empty wells so much. We have different words for it. We call it: addictions, distractions, numbing, coping, soothing, validating, people pleasing, compromising—empty wells, all the ways in which we are trying to satisfy that deep soul longing and thirst.

Remember, Satan subverts what God creates. So, as your Creator, God is the only one who can satisfy those needs that you have. Why? Because He’s the One who gave you those needs. He’s your Creator. And He desires to satisfy the longings of your soul in a way that does two things: it glorifies Him because we were made to glorify Him, and it leads to our flourishing and the flourishing of our relationships.

And Satan always tries to deceive you into subverting the process. He goes back to the age-old lie in the Garden, “Did God really say? He’s holding out on you. Take a short cut.”

See, this isn’t the only definition of sin, but it is a definition of sin: sin is striving to satisfy a legitimate need that we have in an illegitimate way.

So, you take the Ten Commandments, you take everything that the Bible calls sin, this isn’t just a naughty list or God trying to ruin your fun, this is God recognizing that you have a real need.

In sexual intimacy there is a real legitimate need there. He just wants you to do it His way. Why? Because if you don’t you and everybody else gets hurt.

When it comes to money, money and the things that it provides for your family is a really, really good thing. But it becomes a bad thing when you make it an ultimate thing.

When it comes to career, relationships, reputation, success, validation, meaning, purpose, fulfillment—all good things, and sin is the shadow side of all of it. They are good and holy and right and when they no longer become good and holy and right is when we take a short cut to get the things that God has promised us and ultimately wants for us anyway because He’s created us for it. Listen. It’s in a way that cuts Him out of the process by elevating self.

So, the number one religion in the world today is not Christianity, it’s not Islam, it’s not Hinduism. It’s not anything that ends in ism. It’s not Atheism. It’s me and my pride. It’s this type of humanistic effort that I bring where I’m worshipping self. I’m trying to meet

a legitimate need in an illegitimate way. In other words, an empty well and a cracked cistern.

And some of you, you've been at it long enough to know it just doesn't hold any water and it leaves you spiritually and emotionally more parched than ever.

So, here's the invitation today. Would you be willing to come to the well? Would you be willing to stop chasing cracked cisterns and drink deeply from this living water that only Jesus Christ can provide.

Here's what I'm going to ask you to do at all of our locations. I'm just going to ask you, here in a minute to just step out where you are. There is just something about physically moving our bodies that connects us to an emotional or spiritual experience that we have. It's kind of like baptism. It's like the Sacraments. It's something that we physically do.

I want to ask you to do something physical today. I know it might be a little bit uncomfortable, but I just want you to know that you're with family. Nobody is looking at you. I'm going to ask you to step out where you are and come down front, symbolically at all of our locations. Symbolically, we've got a well here on the platform. As you approach the well you leave your empty, broken, and cracked cisterns and drink deeply from the well of living water that Jesus provides.

So, I'm going to ask if you would across all of our locations, just with heads bowed and eyes closed if you would just stand to your feet right now. And I'm going to pray, my eyes are closed, my head is bowed. And I'm just going to pray. And as I'm praying, I'm going to be praying over you and I'm going to invite you just to step out where you are and start streaming down the aisles to down front. That's just symbolically, "This is me getting over my pride, getting over myself. I'm going to have an encounter with living water. I'm just going to come down front."

What you're going to do is you're going to come down front and you can get down on your knees if you want to, you can stay standing if you want to, you come with the person you are sitting next to or alone. You're just going to come down front, and I'm just going to pray over you.

So, as I'm saying this if you would just step out to the aisles and come down front. I'm going to begin to pray a prayer of blessing over you. And it's going to lead into a time of worship and singing where we ask the Spirit of God to meet us in this place to provide us with living water.

So, as people are coming, I'm seeing people coming out and right now that inner attorney in your mind is trying to talk you out of it, I just want to encourage you. Listen, man. Nobody is looking at you. We are for you, and we are with you. And we want you to have this experience. So, would you come, even with just a little bit of tiny faith?



Maybe the cynic in you is winning, but I want to encourage you by faith to say, "No, I'm going to go down front. I'm going to drink deeply from living waters." And as people are coming I just want to pray.

Father, I just ask that You would be with these men and women who have had the courage to say, "You know what? I'm going to step out because I've been trying to satisfy this thirst in my life in illegitimate ways and I'm sick of it. I'm so tired of it. I'm tired of addiction. I'm tired of compromise. I'm tired of trying to chase after the thing that Satan subverts God's good gifts with. I want to drink deeply from living water."

Father, as a church, may we be about the Spirit and the truth. That we would be uncompromising with the truth. Not mean with the truth. Not abrasive with the truth. Not condescending with the truth. But sweet spirited like Jesus is. Not backing off of the truth but at the same time we would be people moved by the Spirit, an extravagant kind of love because we recognize what we've been saved from.

So, Father, I pray for these who have come forward today and I just ask that Your Holy Spirit would fall densely and freshly upon us today. That as we lift our voices up to You, that as we have an encounter with You, that You would meet that thirst within us. We are tired of trying to meet legitimate needs in an illegitimate way. You are King Jesus, both Savior and Lord. We ask this in Jesus' name. And everybody says as we lift our voices and sing together: Amen.

