

August 8, 2021

ASKED & ANSWERED

...Shifting our mindset from expectation to revelation



*"Where can you
get this
living water?"*

John 4:11

Special Music: "Holy Water" We The Kingdom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KLQ2AXQmtA>

Question 6

John 4:11 ..."Where can you get this living water?"

Answer 6

John 4:13-14 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

THE DESERT OF THE SOUL

Beneath the broom tree
I make my bed in the desert sand,
A filthy rag
Gathering dust
In the dryness
Of the land.
My tongue is parched
My belly burns
Sandaled feet scorched
My convictions churn
And merge with despair.
Heat from an unforgiving sun
Turns my skin to leather.
As my body swells
My spirit becomes a wisp,
Vapor wafting into dead air.
I beg to die.

Little life left within.
My religion wearing thin
No longer fit,
I choose to quit.
But God has another plan
A dried-out dew rag from superman,
Poor choice for a clergyman
God has a use for me yet.

**First, to rest this aching flesh
Beneath this tree, convalesce.
Awakened now by angel touch
Upon my brow.**

**At my head
A cake of bread
Water jar,
And a thread of hope.**

**Once again
An impulse to rest and sleep.
I can travel no farther
Without infusion,
Body, Mind, Spirit, Soul**

**Once refreshed
I stand,
Survey the land
And know the course
Mapped by God's hand.
God's grand plan
To use this broken, beaten man.
I step into renewed purpose.**

**A dream? Perhaps.
Is this not where
The desert of the soul
Manifests itself?
Barren landscape**

Devoid of cause.
Giving pause
To raging seas,
Drained...
Until only sand remains.
In lonely, broken desert,
I find my source
As I lean into renewed purpose.
I give up my soul
As God brings forth
Springs of living water
To quench my thirst,
He brings the rain
To refill the plane
And makes me whole
Allowing me once again
To serve my creator
With abundant joy.

I have often talked about that farm that my parents had when I was growing up. Its footprint among my memories is an important part of my life journey. It gives me a great collection of stories to draw from. I do not know if it is because it occurred during my formative years or because memories can just be powerful tools for when we deal with the weariness of the world around us. But I am grateful that God makes those memories available to me so that I can share them with you.

Our farm was split into two sections joined at one corner with a dirt access road that ran between them. The road led to properties owned by other farmers and ranchers. When my parents first acquired the property, there was a stock tank on one of the sections. It was a rain fed pond and although I can only remember a couple of times that there was more mud than water, it was prone to very low levels in times of draught. Dad leased the property to a cattle rancher and the pond was the only water available for those cows. A creek ran through the property, but it only flowed when it was raining. During the hot summer, the pond was vital for the survival of those cows.

It was also a place for me to fish and explore. Dad had stocked it with catfish, perch and bass and fed them with fish blocks. He did not stock the tank with water moccasins and snapping turtles. They seemed to have found their own way to the pond. I would often hang out a trot line in the evening and return in the morning, pull up the line, and find most hooks occupied. Perch, bass, water moccasin, turtle, catfish. I'd kill the moccasins, free the turtles and took the fish home for lunch.

We built our homestead on the other section, right next to the corner where the properties joined. There was no stock pond on that section. Dad did have a well dug. He chose where to dig the well with a divining rod. Now, I will have you know that I have used a divining rod and I never really found it to be all that accurate. But dad believed it in. Where the rod said to dig, that's where the well was dug. He put a hand pump on the well head, and we used that hand pump for years. It provided a limited amount of water. We were lucky to get two or three gallons at a time from the pump and then we would have to wait a few hours for the well to refill. Perhaps the well just wasn't deep enough. The water was very hard and laden with minerals, almost to the point of being undrinkable. So, we often brought drinking water with us and used the well water to take baths, wash dishes, and wash up after a long day of work. Dad eventually put an electric pump on the well, but that had a number of issues since the well would only deliver a limited amount of water at a time causing us to burn up several pumps.

At one point, my dad told me that we were going to build another stock pond, this one on the section that we had built the house on. But this stock pond was going to be different from the other stock pond and the well. About two hundred yards from the house and on another corner of the property, there was a spring. It wasn't like a flowing, gurgling spring, but it kept that corner of the property pretty much in a marsh state. Dad decided to use the spring to feed the new stock pond, which was about twice as big as the old one. He hired a contractor to come out with his equipment, clear the land and dig the pond. And it was everything Dad imagined. The pond never went dry. He stocked it with

bass, perch and catfish, like the other one. And yes, the water moccasins and turtles found their way to this pond as well.

Because of the spring, the water level remained fairly constant throughout the year. I have often asked myself (I was a little afraid to question my dad's judgement. I looked up to him as a giant in my life.) why dad didn't just run a water line from the spring rather than go to the expense of digging the well, a well that never quite met our needs.

We planted an orchard (apples, pears, and plums) near the house and not far from the well. But I couldn't use the well water to water the orchard. There just wasn't enough water there to even begin to meet the needs for the orchard. Dad made a wooden sled and put a 55-gallon tank on it. I would take the tractor and pull the sled to the new stock tank, fill the 55-gallon tank with a bucket, and then haul the water back to the orchard to water the trees. It usually took about 10 trips to water all the trees. As much as I loved my dad, I still think we should have just tapped into that spring. Hauling water like that in the hot summer sun brought me little joy. But I am sure there must be something that I did not understand that prevented Dad from tapping that spring for more than just filling the new stock pond.

So, the Wellborn farm had four sources of water.

- 1) A stock pond for use by cattle that we did not own and which also served as my favorite fishing spot. But it was susceptible to draught because it was rain fed. This water was not drinkable.

2) The second source of water was the hand pump in front of the cabin.

The water was heavy and bitter with minerals. It was difficult to drink. It was also not quite deep enough making it was a very limited water source.

3) The third source of water was the newer, second pond on a section of property where there were no cattle. The water was used mostly for keeping the orchard hydrated. This water had to be hand delivered to the orchard which was an extremely laborious process. This pond would not diminish because it was spring fed and remained somewhat level year around. Because this water remained muddy and dirty, it also was not drinkable.

4) The fourth source was the spring itself, but it had only been tapped to as a resource for the second stock pond.

We've talked about the Woman at the Well before and we have talked about Living Water before. But we have never really focused on the question we are looking at today: **Where can you get this living water?**

There are so many unique lessons that come from this story of the Woman at the Well, and it would be easy to stop and dwell on any them:

1) The fact that Jesus went out of his way to go through Samaria to find this woman.

- 2) The fact that this well was in Samaria and not Judah.
- 3) The Fact that the first person to whom Jesus explains who He is, is a woman. A Samaritan woman. A sin riddled Samaritan woman. A down on her luck, rejected, despised, divorced, sin riddled Samaritan woman. She and I have a lot in common.
- 4) The fact that this well, a well dug by Jacob, had strong ties to the Old Testament.
- 5) The fact that this woman is alone at the well.
- 6) And the fact Jesus uses this opportunity to discuss Living Water for the first time in His ministry. And by doing so, He steps into a common theme for His ministry, the heart of His message to all people.

But right now, we want to focus on the question that the woman is asking Jesus. **"Where can you get this living water?"** When we thirst for water, we usually have several resources to draw from. I want you to think back to my story today about the water resources on the farm when I was growing up. It's very similar to a parable, although my parables are not as insightful as those of Jesus.

When we consider the water resources that my family had available, we first look at that original stock pond. Now, that pond was dependent on rain so in times of draught it was pretty useless. Sometimes we tie our lives to water sources

that are dependent on a supply that is not always available. Resources that become unavailable in hard times. When we are totally reliant on limited resources, there will come a time when those resources are not available, and our lives will come crashing down around us as we scramble to seek out a new supply. If we are fixed on allowing other people to quench our thirst, what happens when those people leave us or desert us and we find ourselves scrambling to find some other source to meet our needs. Usually, when that happens, the source we find is inferior and we pay the price with our health, values, and lifestyles.

The second water source on the farm was the well pump. That water was very bitter and limited in the amount that could be pulled from it. That is like the people in our lives that remain uncommitted to relationships; only willing to give so much and what they do give is laced with resentment and bitterness. They are convinced that giving of themselves is forced, coerced. Rather than thinking of it as giving out of abundance, they see others as taking resources from them, resources that rightfully belongs to the giver, and the giver feels they are owed something in return. After all, they only have so much to give and expect whatever they share to be replaced as quickly as possible. Water gathered from this type of relationship is seldom satisfying and it always tastes bitter in our mouths.

The third water source on the farm was the second stock pond fed by the spring. This water was always there and available, but was contaminated by the elements around it, mud, scum, and invisible parasites. Not something you would normally want to drink unless you were beyond desperate. You could dip your hat in it and cool your head, but it couldn't quench your thirst. This is similar to those Christians around us that draw resources from Christ but don't share with others. It's a rather selfish way of living a Christian life, considering that the spring is forever refilling the lives of those Christians. They come to worship on Sunday. The leave worship full. But they never allow themselves to overflow. They partake of the table but don't share that table with others. They never invite others to join them at the table because they feel that the table is exclusive and belongs to those already at the table. They can't seem to grasp that Jesus never meant for His resources to remain within "the club", limited to the "members". They don't quite understand that getting refilled for personal gain is, for all intents and purposes, totally contrary to the heart of the message that Christ teaches with regards to sharing. There is a reason that Jesus chose a "A down on her luck, rejected, despised, divorced, sin riddled Samaritan woman" to share His Living Water with. He could just have easily sought out a legal-minded, resentful, religiously associated, judgmental Pharisee who just happened to also be a man. But that would have been total contrast to Jesus' message that the Living Water that He

was sharing, was for all people. Even those we don't see eye-to-eye with Even those we think are contemptible. Even those we have decided are unworthy to receive this abundant, refreshing water.

Because we see that the fourth source of water is serving a purpose, it is difficult for us to see that the spring water is under-utilized. It was never tapped to provide a refreshing quenching of our thirst. As Christians, though, we have chosen to tap into the Living Water that Christ provides. Jesus answered the woman's question: **"but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**

I want you to think about one of those fountains where the water starts at the top, then fills a container below it to overflowing, which spills into another container, which overflows into another container before the water finally reaches the reservoir. That's what Jesus is talking about here. He provides us with His Living Water, and we overflow into the other people around us who, in turn, overflow into the other people around them. If we don't allow the water to fill us and overflow, if we just let the water fall into the reservoir, we are only quenching our own thirst at the expense of meeting the thirst of those around us.

I'm not picking on anyone here, so don't take it personally, but I give each of you a gold coin with the intent that you give it to someone else. This activity is

an example of how God's Living Water flows through us into those around us.

There really is no reason to hang onto the coin. When you give it away, I give you another one. It is an example of how Jesus meant for this all to work. God provides me with the resources to give you the coins. It really doesn't matter who you give your coin to, I will give you another one to replace it. It doesn't matter who benefits when the love of Christ flows through you into others. He will refill you. And there is always an abundance to go around. He doesn't run out.

Go make a difference in someone's life this week. Give them a coin. Share the Living Water of Christ with them. Carry a box for them. Give them a drink. Pay for their meal in a drive-through. Help that woman in the supermarket reach that container on the top shelf. Give someone a ride. Invite someone to church so that they can share this fellowship. Invite someone to the All-Church Breakfast or The Fellowship Lunch. Give someone a coin just because... knowing that I am going to give you another one to replace it.

"Where can you get this living water?" There is only one source. There is only one faucet that we can turn on that will always provide for us more than we can ever use. There is only one Jesus Christ who loves us so much that He gives His life for us, not so we can contain love, but so that we can allow it to overflow through us into others.

AMEN

Copyright © 2021 Rev. Walt Wellborn

Scripture references provided under copyright by:

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.