

ANONYMOUS PART ONE
AMAZING LOVE
PASTOR GLENN BARTEAU
JOHN 4:4-26
10/7/07

Have you ever wanted to hide? Or avoid being put on the spot? Have you ever been in class and you can tell the teacher is looking for someone to call on and you don't want it to be you. So you do anything to avoid eye contact... hoping you will be unnoticed.

Have you ever been at a dinner party and after an hour or so you discover a giant bugger hanging out of your nose or your hair in the back is sticking straight up? And you just want to sneak out of the house.

Pulled over Taking Chandler out and an officer of the law pulls me over on Oracle Rd.
 "Chandler "I hope he doesn't take to long... this is really cutting into my time."
 Hey, when he gets here it's yes sir, thank you, I understand..."

Sitting on oracle Rd. a bicycle goes by that's a pastor friend of mine... Hey Jerry,

Moments –vs- a life

Jesus has an encounter with a woman who's having more than just a bad moment... It's become a way of life... she's trying to keep the world at arm's length.

Arm's length

Here's what you have to know about this woman. Life has not been good to her. She's failed at marriage in a culture that has little grace for women. Five times she started over on marriage... 5 times she was rejected. But not just by men... She seems to have no friends, no one to hang with.

Given up

By the time we pick up this woman's story in John 4 she's given up.
 She's given up on marriage...
 She's given up on community – She comes to the well in the middle of the day... when typically no one else would have been around.
 She's given up on a changed life.
 She's given up on joy, peace, love, and hope.
 She's given up on God

What she seeks is aloneness and isolation... probably because it's safe. Better to be isolated and lonely, and risk rejection in community.

↳ Being anonymous makes sense to her

John 4:4-8

⁴Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

"Would you get me a drink?"

> This is the last thing in the world this woman wants. She comes to the well in the middle of the day when it's hot. Why? To get away from people. She's had enough with men. And worst of all – It's a religious Jewish guy when she's a Samaritan.

(ILL)

Its like getting on a plan and learning that person next to you is a pastor...

(Story)

Several years ago I was at lunch w/ a friend when one of his friends walked by and started talking. He told several off color jokes, How he just cheated some poor sap in a business deal... Then he asked so what do you do? I pointed to my friend and said his pastor." He laughed that a funny blanked, blank joke. No really how do you know each other.

> Jesus and this woman enter into this conversation and for the most part she is just trying to keep this religious guy at arms length... but Jesus will not give up.

Key statement in this passage...

John 4:10

..."If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

If you could understand the gift of God... This doesn't make any sense in the world to her...

Friends

this is real fundamental to Christ. This was his ministry. To lead people into understanding the gift of God.

~ To experience life w/ God.

T>>

WE struggle with this... This woman struggled with understanding the gift of God. She has some **core beliefs** that make it difficult for her to understand the gift of God.

Samaritan Reli The Samaritan's faith was a profoundly Jewish faith, but they had some deep differences

Little history... I promise to make it as painless as possible. But this is real important to understanding what's going here...
So I'm going to ask a couple of times are you with me? And you say yes... even if you're not, because then I'll feel like I've got explain it even more.

Q: So, Are you w/ me?

900 years earlier Israel goes through a civil war and is divided into the North & South. A couple hundred years later the Northern kingdom... which becomes known as Samaria is conquered and destroyed by the Assyrians. Most of them are killed or hauled off to foreign lands making it harder for them to rise up... and the Assyria's bring in people from other conquered lands to work the fields of Northern Israel.

So here's why this is so important. For more than 6 hundred years the Samaritans are relatively isolated from the Judeans. The Samaritans only view the Pentateuch as divine scripture while the Judeans believed the entire O.T. was divine scripture.

This created two distinct beliefs that cause problems.

1st Out of Deut 18 they come to believe in a coming Messiah, or Christ, but for different reasons than the Judeans.

In Deut 18 they is a very sad moment for the Israelites. They are fleeing from Egypt, but they are also scared of God. He seems big and scary. He can cause plagues. He opens up seas and crushes whole armies. And while He did all this for their benefit. They still had this fear that relating to God was like playing with dynamite.

Therefore... they tell Moses "we don't want to talk to God... we don't want to get close to God." You tell God to send someone to talk and relate to God for us.

This is sad... But God relents, rather than loose them all together God says okay I'll send someone.

~ The Samaritans took this to be the coming Messiah someday.

Strange – But, God great gift would be to send someone that would talk and relate to God so that we don't really have to have a relationship with him.

→ We want to keep God at arms length.

2nd Out of Duet 10 they come to believe the primary place to worship God was not Jerusalem... but Mt. Ger'izim

- We want to just keep God at arms length.... We want a whole mountain between us and God... because relating to God is scary stuff.
- Q: What if He saw something you did wrong and got mad?
- Q: What if you had to explain to God why you failed at something?
- Q: What if God just got to know you and didn't like you?

This... is this woman's faith... it's all she knows... Keep God at arms length... and keep everyone else at arms length.

- ⇒ This... is this woman's faith... it's all she knows about God.
- ⇒ This... is this woman's life... It's one of rejection and pain every time she get close to someone.

The absolute best thing in the world for this woman is to be completely totally unnoticed... because... to be noticed is to be hurt.

↳ So she keeps everyone at arms length... **so she thinks.**

Jesus steps in

And he understands this woman thinks she's better off, but she is thirsty... thirsty for a life of love and acceptance. A life of real community.

John 4:10

Jesus says... "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

She thinks it's about her physical needs... running water or something...

> At this point everything Jesus says is about leading this woman to understand the gift of God. At first he seems a little rude, but he's driving to something.

John 4:16

... "Go, call your husband and come back."

↳ and of course she has no husband. It seems a little mean. But here's what Jesus up to.

John 4:17

she says: I have no husband. Then Jesus springs something on her she's not expecting. He says that's right. You have five husbands and the man you now have is not your husband.

Samaritan Messiah

Remember the Samaritans believed the Messiah is described in Duet 18. It's this Moses like person who will connect them to God.... And, the way you will know it's him... is... he will know. He will know and he won't be wrong.

Here she is... and he knows... He knows about the five husbands... and the guy she's living w/ now.... He knows... he knows what is hidden. What she has tried to keep from God and others... this man knows.

She is beginning to connect Jesus with the one promised in Deut 18...

John 4:19-20

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

She's a little rattled... **she's turning this into a discussion about dogma and doctrine.**

.... Then Jesus looks deep into her soul... and invites her into the kingdom of God...

John 4:21-24

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

⇒ Jesus is saying the kingdom is open to you. The kingdom of God is open to anyone who thirst for it. It's open to overlooked, anonymous spiritual zeros. He says you... you will worship God in spirit and truth.

Look at how she responds...she wants to know if this is really true... is she really being invited into the kingdom of God...?

John 4:25-26

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." He knows...

Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

T>>

I love this story... This anonymous woman who's spent a life time trying to keep God at arms length... just discovers that God has been sitting next to her at the well... and she's never the same. **She is left in total Amazement w/ God.**

Application:

Amazed

The woman who has spent a life-time keeping God and arms length has just lowered her arm.

Sometimes we keep God at arms length and don't even know it.

- a) We make God an issue of dogma & doctrine. "We worship on this hill you worship in Jerusalem.
 - a. Solid study of scripture and accurate doctrine in important... **But it is not a relationship.**
 - b. There is a difference between having a good definition of faith, and living by faith.
- b) We neglect soaking in moments w/ God... to just be in God's presence and be amazed by God.

John 4:27-32

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

The disciples missed the moment... but this woman didn't... it wasn't lost on her.

- ⇒ Great truth from this passage. Every time we have an amazing moment with God... God is having an amazing moment w/ us... Isn't great.
- ⇒ Jesus is touched to the core of his being. This was a moment he longed for as much as this woman did.

(Story)

I love coming home... Angie is always glad to see me... you can take over now. And my kids fly up and tackle me and love on me... Some times I'll go back and walk around the front yard come in again just to experience it all over again.

Response

Don't miss the beauty and amazing thing that happened.

This woman far from God. Learns that God has a gift... the gift of Himself... She knew that God would send a Messiah that would be a connection between her and God... she just didn't know God would send Himself... But He did...

Before we go I want us to have a moment to live in this same Amazement...

- ~ If there is some **failure** in your life... it does not matter... God knows
- ~ If you feel **discourage** or far from God... it not the ultimate reality of your life... God is closer than you may feel.
- ~ If you are one who tends to turn your relationship w/ God into **academic** exercises of defining dogma & doctrine – put it aside – don't try to deduce the just meditate just be amazed by God

Make this song a prayer... a singing prayer, and as you sing it... don't just sing the words...

Sing them to Jesus as if he were right he in this room.

Sing them as if it were the first day of your salvation...

Sing them as if it were your very first morning heaven