

18.6.23 am

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Preacher: Reverend Neil Lachie Macdonald

[0 : 0 0] Good morning everyone. A warm welcome to the service. A special welcome to those who are visiting. There's a few with us this morning and if you're able to stay behind there's tea, there's coffee at the end of the service. Well I hope there will be at the end of the service and there'll be the chance to enjoy fellowship together. There's some who are not visiting but they're here for the first time in a while and I can see a few. I won't name everybody but I see Nanny along at the far left and it's great to see Nanny back with us. I know she watches week by week but it's good to have her back in the congregation this morning along with various others as well.

The intimations have been on the screen this morning and I'll just take a moment and go through a few of these. First of all just to highlight that the evening service tonight will be at six o'clock and that's going to be a communion service. So this is something we haven't done before but we're having an evening communion. This evening we had events last night and Friday night which some were attendance at and this is a service this morning where we worship God and also we are prepared in our hearts to come to the Lord's table. So the invitation goes out to any who are in any branch of the church of Christ to come and to remember the Lord's death until he comes. The session will open elders if you could maybe go to the wee room on my left at the end of the service and the session will open then. If there are those who know the Lord, who trust the Lord, who haven't yet come into membership of the church, who haven't taken communion yet then please be encouraged to come.

We would be delighted to meet you and to welcome those who know the Lord, who love the Lord into the fellowship of the church. One or two other things just in the course of the week.

There's a safeguarding training on on Tuesday. You had the details on the screen. I'm not going to read them all out just now but if you want to speak to anyone you can speak to Gordon or Joyce who will give you more details on that. In the course of the week as usual, Ladies Fellowship, Road to Recovery, Prayer Meeting, usual times and usual places. The prayer meeting will be taken this week by Stuart, Stuart King. I'm going to be away Wednesday through till Friday so Stuart will take the prayer meeting this week. Service is next Sunday. English service in the morning which I'll take myself and the evening service is the monthly Gaelic service. The Reverend Kenny Ferguson will lead that service and we'll be having a fellowship at the end. The 23rd of June which I think is this coming Friday, there's an event marking 50 years in ministry for the Reverend Rory Morrison who's a great friend of the congregation here and it's also marking 40 years of the Reverend

James MacDonald in ministry. It's going to be the High Free congregation have organised it. It's in the MA Hall in Stornoway at half past seven. So that's this coming Friday. It'd be nice if a few of us could go along and just show how much we've appreciated their ministry over the years. Summer Holiday Club, there is a sign-up sheet for those who are willing to and available to assist in the Holiday Club. It's out in the vegetable you get there. Please if you could put your name on that or speak to Gordon it says here who will give a bit more information there. The barbecue last night, it was great to have a barbecue just before the skies opened and the rain came down and thank you for all who came, all those who who helped with it and especially Team 3 who put in a good shift. The Sunday school will meet as normal today apart from the older Sunday school who will meet, who will stay in the service today. You've got a better preacher this morning so the older Sunday school, a decision has been taken to stay in and not exit on this particular Sunday. And I think these are all the notices. I want to just welcome Neil Lachey. Some of you met him in the last couple of days, some of you haven't. Neil is the minister over in Ulipu and he's also my brother-in-law so he has that to bear as a cross. But it's great to have him with us. He has preached on a Wednesday evening before. He's never actually preached here on a Sunday. So it's good to have him preaching tonight and this morning. The evening service, we've got a fellowship afterwards and Neil will share a word of testimony at that as well. But it's good to have you and a warm welcome and we will pray for you as you serve the Lord and as we come under your ministry for the next hour or so.

[5 : 01] A couple of hours. Thank you David. Good morning. Nice to see you all. Tai blah. It's warm. Apologies to the older kids. I'll be sure to make it as interactive as possible. So just be aware I might ask you questions throughout. So no sleeping.

Let's begin our worship today singing to God's praise from Sing Sam, Psalm 107. I think all the words will come up on the screen for us. We'll thank the Lord for he is good, his love endures always. Let's stand and sing to God's praise.

Oh, thank the Lord for he is good, his love endures always. Let those whom God redeems say this, those rescued by his grace.

Those rescued by his grace. He sent them from the enemies and brought them from the land.

From east and west, from north and south, save from a pressing hand.

[6 : 28] Some wandered in the desert ways, not finding any way to reach a city where they might obtain a place to stay.

Their life and strength was having passed in cursed and cleftness.

Then in despair he sought the Lord to save them from distress.

Straight was the path he led them on a city to attain. So for the Lord's unfailing love, let them give thanks again.

And for the awesome deeds of God, which he for them achieved. For hungry souls he fills with good, the thirsty he released.

[8 : 10] Well folks, shall we unite our hearts together in prayer as we come before the throne of grace? Let's pray. Lord God, our loving Heavenly Father, we give thanks this morning that we come before the God who is good, the one who delights to fill the hungry, the one who delights to quench the thirst of those who are thirsty.

Lord God, as we gather us, your people, as we come in to your presence, we do so with thankful hearts, acknowledging your gracious kindness unto us, a wayward and a rebellious people, those who are more concerned with self so often than anything of you or your kingdom.

And yet great is thy faithfulness. You are a God who is slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love. You are a God who is with us. You are a God who draws ever closer to us.

You are the one who is high and lifted up. You are the King of kings, the Lord of lords. You are the one whose name is holy, the one who inhabits time and space and eternity.

You are God. You are our God. You are the one who has revealed yourself to us in and through your word by your spirit and particularly through the life, the work, the witness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who came to serve and not to be served, the one who came to give his life as a ransom for many, the one who gave all of himself in order that we might be redeemed, in order that we may be redeemed by his blood, forgiven of our sins, reconciled unto you, welcomed into your family, restored and renewed.

[9 : 52] Lord God, we thank you for the wonder of the gospel. We thank you for its simplicity and yet for its profundity. We thank you, Lord God, that you are in the business of transforming lives even yet today.

And so, Father, we pray this morning that as we gather in worship, everything that is done would be done in order and would be pleasing in your sight. As we raise up our voices, our hearts and our minds to you in worship, as we remove ourselves from the worries and the anxieties of life, as we disregard the diary of the week ahead, and as we focus our thoughts on you, the life giver, the one who has come to quench the thirst of the soul.

Father, we pray that you would renew us and refresh us in and through your word. We pray for those this morning for whom life is difficult, for things are not going perhaps as they might have hoped.

We pray for those whose bodies are failing them, those who are cast down, those laid low, those weak in body, those fragile in mind. Lord, would you draw alongside them?

Would you uphold them and keep them? May you be their strength and their shelter, their refuge and their safe place. We pray for those who are not here who could have been here.

[11 : 08] We pray, Lord God, that you would work in the hearts of many, that you would send your spirit upon our communities, that you would draw people inextricably to yourself, that the irresistible draw of grace would be upon the hearts and lives of many, and that you would help those of us who already are recipients of and who delight in the grace of God to open our eyes and to see the field, which is white unto harvest.

Lord, may we be willing to go. May we be willing to fulfill the mandate that has been given to us to go to all tribes, tongues, nations, and to make disciples, to teach and instruct and lead and guide all those whom we know in the ways of the Lord, the one who brings true satisfaction, who brings true peace, and the one alone who can usher us into your kingdom.

And so, Father, we pray that you would bless us today, bless our worship, bless us as we prepare ourselves to sit at your table this evening, God willing, that we would exercise obedience to the command, the directive, the instruction issued to us by Christ Jesus himself, who said, if you love me, obey my commands, before saying, do this in remembrance of me.

We pray that as we gather to remember the Lord's death until he comes, we pray that you would draw many more who would sit and who would take of the bread and drink of the wine and remember and give thanks for the Savior who died, the one who shed his blood, in order that we may be free.

Hallelujah. What a Savior. We pray these things in his name. Amen. Now then, I believe the boys and girls come down to the front. Do you? Do you come a bit closer?

[12 : 53] I know I'm a bit bigger than David and maybe a wee bit scarier looking, but I'm not really. We come from every direction.

Good job. How's everyone today? Good? Fine. Excellent. Anyone warm? No? I'm roasting. Yeah, it's really warm, isn't it?

So, on a warm day like this, what kind of things can you do to cool down? What do you think, Willis? Go to the beach? You were there yesterday, yeah? Did you do anything at the beach to cool down?

Swimming in the sea, yeah? You had wetsuits on, I didn't. Anything else you might do if you were hot? Oh, do you, Willis? Go to bed with you.

Anything else you would do if you were hot? Water. What do you think? It's freezing cold. I'm about to think, yeah. It's not freezing cold, but, you know, it's not too bad. Yeah, it's a bit of icing it.

[13 : 53] We need water, don't we? We can live for a long time. I know people that have lived for weeks without anything to eat. But we really need water to survive. Because a large part of the bodies that we have, that you have, that I have, is made up of water.

I've got a couple of pictures. Hopefully they'll come up on the screen. I don't know if it'll work. But our bodies are really made up of loads and loads of water. They say that the human body, for a guy, is about 60%.

That's more than half of our bodies are made up of water. So it's really important that we keep drinking. If we don't drink, we'll get dehydrated. And then we'll get confused.

And then our minds will start playing tricks on us. So it's really important that you keep drinking. I always have to remind Isabella to keep drinking. She's not great at having a drink. Her brother, however, well, he's like a fish.

She drinks like a fish. So it's not such a worry. But we have to keep on drinking. And putting that refreshing water or liquid into our bodies.

[14 : 54] So that we'll be healthy. And so that we'll live. But, you know, in life, we don't just thirst for liquid. We don't just thirst for water. We thirst, in some ways, for lots of other things.

We might thirst after getting a certain thing. Or going to a certain place. Or doing certain activities. These things can be desires. Because a thirst is a desire in us.

It's something that we want. It's something that we need. It's something that we long for. And there are other things in life that become wants and longings. And that we yearn for them.

It might be something simple like the next pair of trainers that came out. You know, if you wanted a... What's a cool pair of trainers now? I don't know. I'm not cool. So I don't really wear trainers.

Nike Air Maxes. They were cool when I was young. I think they're still on the go. What are the ones you're wearing called? Air Forces. So, yeah. So it might be that you want a pair of trainers that are cool.

[15 : 52] Or it might be that you're looking forward to the next, I don't know, computer game that's coming out. Or I don't know what girls like. What do girls like? What might you be looking forward to? A new handbag or something like that.

A new phone, maybe. There's lots of things that we might desire. We might thirst for. But, you know, none of these things will actually do us any good. They'll not keep us. They'll not make us healthier.

They'll not give us a hope for the future. Because they'll all get old. And they'll all break down. And they'll all become out of date. All of these things. There is one thing that will never go out of date.

That will never let us down. That will keep going. And will keep getting better. And will keep getting more and more glorious for us. And that is our faith in Jesus. Because he says that he's the living water.

And that he will come and give us streams of living water in our hearts. And that means, he says, I will refresh you all the time. I will keep your thirst quenched. I will give you hope.

[16 : 53] I will be with you always. How many of you have been to the beach and dug a hole? Most of you, yeah. So you dig a big hole. And then you think. If you're anything like I was when I was me. You think, right, I've dug this amazing hole.

I'm going to make a swimming pool. I'm going to fill it with water. And you go down to the water's edge. And you get your bucket. And you fill it with water. And you come back up. And you maybe have your bucket. Have you ever tried this? Fill your bucket with water. And then swing it right round.

Right upside down. Have you ever done that? There's a physics lesson there. But the water stays in the bucket. It doesn't land on your head. I promise. You've got to do it very quickly. Anyway, I digress. So you come back up to the hole.

And you pour your bucket of water into the hole. You go back down to the water. You get another bucket. You try the thing again. You come back up to the hole. And where's the water that you poured in? Gone.

It's got a way out of the sand. I'm going to have to do this quicker. So you run down to the water. You get another bucket. You come back. By the time you come back, the water's gone again. What on earth is going on? I'm going to make a train.

[17 : 49] So you dig down water. No, there's still sand. Regardless of how much water you put in, it just keeps disappearing. And that's really a picture of life. All the things in life that we try and fill our lives with.

Say our lives are like that hole in the sand. And we're going down. We're going to this thing and that thing. And we're getting the next trainers and the new handbag and the game and the car and the holiday and the house. And we're putting it all in the hole.

But by the time we come back, it's disappearing. But the thing is, Jesus says, I will give you living water that will bubble up from inside you. It will fill you. And you'll never want.

That's really good news. That's the good news of the gospel. So, trust in Jesus. And he says, I will give you the desires of your heart. I will fill your heart with good things.

I will quench your thirst. I will renew your strength. I will give you a hope for the future. You can try all of these other things. But they'll just disappear slowly until they're completely gone.

[18 : 42] But he says, I will never leave you. And I will never forsake you. And I'll always be with you. And I will save you. And I'll take you into my kingdom with me. So, fill your lives with Jesus.

And you'll never want for anything. Can I pray for you? Yeah? Let's pray. Father God, we thank you for Jesus. We thank you that he is the one who can fill our lives like nothing else.

That he is the one who promises us life abundant, a full and a happy life. And we pray that we would trust in him. And that we would know that spring of living water bubbling up within us.

Filling our lives with joy and with hope and with a future. We pray that you would bless these young people. That they would know Jesus. That they would remember the Lord in the day of their youth. And that you would bless them as they go through life.

Trusting in you above and beyond everything else. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, thank you guys. Are you the younger guys that get to go all the way through to Sunday school now?

[19 : 40] Yes. At the end of the psalm. At the end of the psalm. Okay, at the end of the singing. Yes. Okay, so we are going to sing, I think. It's the Gaelic Psalm. No, it's not. I'm dreaming. It's here is love vast as the ocean.

So the theme is water again. Here is love vast as the ocean. Loving kindness as the flood. We'll stand and we'll sing together. It is love vast as the ocean.

Loving kindness as the flood. When the prince of life, our ransom.

Shed for us his precious blood. Who his love will not remember.

Who can cease to sing his praise. He can never be forgotten.

[20 : 41] Throughout heaven's eternal days. On the mount of crucifixion.

Fountains open deep and wide. Through the floodgates of God's mercy. Float a vast and gracious tide.

Grace and love like mighty rivers. Horde incessant from above.

And heaven's peace and perfect justice. Kissed a guilty world in love.

In your truth you do direct me. By your spirit through your word.

[21 : 42] And your grace my need is meeting. As I trust in you my Lord.

Of your fullness you are pouring. Your great love and power on me.

Without measure full and boundless. Drawing out my heart to thee.

Well folks as the young people are making their way out to Sunday school. We're going to open our Bibles. And we're going to read from the Gospel of John.

And the Gospel of John chapter 4. Yep the words are up on your screens. And so I'll read from that to make sure that we are on the same page.

[22 : 40] As it were. Or John 4. A well-known passage. A well-known encounter. But packed with practical application for us today. As we consider the wonder of the Gospel.

And what it means for us here in Harris in 2023. This is God's Word. Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John.

Although in fact he was not. It was not Jesus who baptized. But his disciples. So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria.

So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar. Near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. And Jesus tired as he was from the journey sat down by the well.

It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her. Will you give me a drink? His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

[23 : 42] The Samaritan woman said to him. You're a Jew. I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink? For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus answered her.

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. Sir. The woman said. You have nothing to draw with.

And the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob. Who gave us the well and drank from it himself. As did also his sons and his livestock.

Jesus answered. Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. 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.

For welling up to eternal life. The woman said to him. Sir. Give me this water. So that I won't get thirsty. And have to keep coming here to draw water. He told her. Go.

[24 : 40] Call your husband. And come back. I have no husband. She replied. Jesus said to her. You are right. When you say you have no husband. The fact is. You have had five husbands. And the man you now have.

Is not your husband. What you have said. Is quite true. Sir. The woman said. I can see. That you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped.

On this mountain. But you Jews claim. That the place. Where we must worship. Is in Jerusalem. Woman. Jesus replied. Believe me. A time is coming. When you will worship the father. Neither on this mountain.

Nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans. Worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know. For salvation. Is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming.

And has now come. When the true worshippers. Will worship the father. In the spirit. And in truth. For they are the kind of worshippers. The father seeks. God is spirit. And his worshippers. Must worship.

[25 : 35] In the spirit. And in truth. The woman said. I know that Messiah. Called Christ. Is coming. When he comes. He will explain. Everything to us. Then Jesus declared.

I. The one speaking to you. I am he. Amen. May the Lord bless. That reading of his own. Holy and inspired word.

To us. Before we turn back to that. For a time this morning. Let's again sing. This time from. The Gaelic rendering of Psalm 42. The opening. Two verses. Which speak of.

The dear panting. For. Water. I am not going to attempt to. Introduce it in. The mother tongue. But. We shall remain seated. For this item of praise.

And sing together. Psalm 42. Verses 1. And 2. And. And.

[26 : 30] And stops there.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[28 : 53] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Lord, we recognize that as sinful people, we get it wrong so often.

we pursue the wrong paths we do the wrong things but we give thanks that you are sufficient and that you are mighty to save but more than that that you are willing you are willing to offer us grace and mercy and love and abundance that though we are deserving of wrath and condemnation you have sent Christ Jesus that we might know your love and your mercy and your grace your peace and your acceptance and so father we pray that we would put our trust in those things that as we thought about with the children we wouldn't be filling our lives with the vacuous and empty things the trivial things of this life that will not last that will come to nothing but that we would fill ourselves all the more on the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus the savior who has died and who has risen again the one who has ascended to your right hand in the throne room of heaven the one who ever lives now to intercede to pray for to represent his people before the throne of grace our great advocate the savior Jesus we pray that we would see him that we would rejoice in him and that we would follow him all the more with our lives we ask these things in his name amen well folks turn back with me to john chapter 4 for a short time this morning and with the lord's help let's see what we can learn from it i suppose it would be true for us to say that many of the most powerful people some of the most significant characters within all of scripture are those who are anonymous we never learn their names the two thieves on either side of jesus on the cross of calvary the young boy who gave his packed lunch to jesus the woman at the well these are well-known stories they're well kent experiences and yet we know little of those who are part of these stories and yet they have left a permanent legacy of blessing and that should be really right at the outset out of the gate an encouragement for us as unknown unlikely ordinary people in an unknown unlikely and ordinary place that in the lord's hands we can do things that will leave a permanent legacy of blessing the flip side of that is of course also true but over the centuries people have referred to this story we've come back to this experience time and time and time again we don't know this lady's name but we learn about her through her encounter with jesus and most of all we see the gift and the changed life that occurs through an encounter with the living christ it's the hot of it's the middle of it's the hot day maybe we can identify somewhat this morning and this troubled woman maybe we can identify with that as well perhaps to avoid the derision or the dirty looks the gossip of other women in the community comes to the well in the heat of the day an unusual thing but as she comes to draw water for her jar she encounters a well of living water she encounters the grace of the risen savior himself and so we discover in this story this woman from the wrong side of the tracks as it were this woman who had a difficult past coming and meeting with jesus and being transformed through that encounter john florin the encounter with the samaritan woman is the longest individual recorded conversation with the lord that we have in scripture it's the story of this unlikely woman coming to faith being transformed by christ and the culmination we get later on in the chapter in verse 39 it says many of the samaritans from that town believed in him in jesus because of this woman's

[35 : 35] testimony it was so evident to them when she came back from the well that she was new she was different she had been changed she was transformed she was not the woman that she was as she trudged up to the well in the heat of that day she'd been longing for satisfaction she'd been looking for satisfaction naturally through the things of the world but they'd come to nothing we all look for and long for satisfaction and the world that we live in is based upon the idea that we should be dissatisfied everything that is sold everything that is marketed everything that is promoted is saying your life will not be complete until you have this thing that we have to offer you until you buy our product until you experience our services you will never be happy it's the myth of the grass is always greener it's it's the myth that says well whatever happiness it's not where i am i have to get there in order to be happy i need satisfaction advertisers marketing firms around the world they're all banking on our dissatisfaction millions billions are sunk into market research to make us unhappy with our lives unhappy with our lives until we realize the thing that they have on offer this woman as she meets with jesus there's an element where she's almost given up she's given up on any notion of satisfaction or happiness within her life as you read it you think this woman is hardened she's cynical oh where is this water what can you draw with show me this this water she's hardened in her heart and in her experiences as a result of her experiences as she meets with jesus she's got an edge to it it's all over the story but interestingly jesus does not offer this woman more stuff he's not like genie in the aladdin movies offering her three wishes he doesn't say i'll give you everything that your heart ever longed for in terms of material possessions and physical ease but what he does promise her is refreshment refreshment and that's what he promises you and i this morning refreshment and it's couched in the term living water this spiritual inward quenching that comes that quenches that satiates the the deep thirst that each and every one of us have for refreshment over and above everything else and it doesn't come from having more things or going more places or doing more experiences it doesn't come from stopping doing certain things william phelps the puritan writer wrote this if happiness truly consisted in physical ease and freedom from care then the happiest individual would neither be a man nor a woman it would be i think the american cow he's got a point hasn't he true refreshment it's an inside job it's a spiritual reality it's not by the amassing of stuff or or success or wealth or whatever it was but it is from being made new within it is from coming to know jesus well in terms of spiritual refreshment i want to take you to four things uh this morning and time is precious so we'll move on a pace number one the need is universal that's what we see within this passage as jesus meets with this lady at the well the need is universal everybody has this need we all have a longing for meaningful spiritual refreshment it's a deep it's a human need it doesn't matter your age your stage your your

gender your economic status it is universal it is all encompassing now just a wee side note as we get into this in verse four you'll notice that it says that jesus had to go through samaria you might say well that's you know minor at best it's actually very significant he had to go through samaria people reading this would say what do you mean he had to go through samaria that's that's the roundabout route that's well out of the way and why on earth would a jew want to go to samaria anyway with their pluralistic uh false worship that was going on he'd just been down the road and in judea he'd met with a notable person there in the previous chapter you remember he met with nicodemus who was nicodemus he was a significant guy he was a religious leader he was well known he was well respected he had status all of these things and then in the next chapter he comes and meets this samaritan woman who is living immorally who is right at the bottom of the social ladder who is despised and and and and it comes under the the eyes of of everyone else who is righteous and sees her as as one who has failed and so what john is doing and what jesus is doing is showing us that regardless of whether you're at the top of the religious ladder or whether you're at the bottom of the social ladder christ jesus is for you and his gospel is for you and his love is for you we've got these two people they are the polar opposites nicodemus was a jew this woman was a samaritan nicodemus was a pharisee this woman belonged to a rival pagan religion he was a politician she had no status whatsoever he was a scholar she was uneducated he was highly moral she was totally immoral he has a name nicodemus she was nameless we don't even know what her name was he was a man in the culture of the day significant she was a woman disregarded in the culture of the day he came under the cover of darkness he came at night she came in the heat of the day when the sun was at its highest nicodemus came seeking jesus jesus came seeking this woman and that's significant for us to remember is that christ is for all not for a certain group of people not for those who have reached a certain level attained a certain standard but that he comes for everyone and he comes for you he comes for you and he wishes to give you the same life as he gives to these or offers to them at least you see nicodemus represents the one who is high and who is mighty and who is lofty in the world's eyes and jesus says you're never too high and mighty and lofty for me to come and save you but he also says by coming to this woman you're never sinking so low that i cannot come and pluck you and lift you up and raise you up and fulfill you there's a beautiful juxtaposition here between these two opposites aren't they and jesus is as relevant to both of them as he is to everybody in between there is a common area between these two people though between nicodemus and this woman and that's their need their spiritual need nicodemus needed jesus the woman at the well needed jesus you need jesus i need jesus we all need jesus regardless of where we are on the social ladder there is no difference between jew and gentile paul reminds us for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of god nicodemus had failed the woman had failed isaiah reminds us that we all like sheep have gone astray whether it's the way of religion like nicodemus trying to attain or whether it's the the woman who who was going down a completely

different path i love the quote that the queen used it was attributed to max locado but i don't think it was actually by him i couldn't find out who it actually originated with if our greatest need would have been for information god would have sent us an educator if our greatest need would have been technology god would have sent us a scientist if our greatest need was money god would have sent us an economist but our greatest need was forgiveness and so he sent us a savior he is the savior going out of his way into a foreign place and land in order to meet with a sinner who needed to be saved because the need is universal it is across the board and notice just quickly how he interacts with her before we move on his his action is prompted by his love he loved nicodemus and he loves this woman and he loves you and i but as he comes to her there are three things to notice very briefly his love transcends culture his love transcends why are you asking me a samaritan for a drink you know the jews have no dealings with the samaritans she knew that jewish people didn't interact with samaritans we could go down the route of the history of that we don't have time just now the point is that jesus goes to people of different cultures different tribes different tongues different nature different cultures because the gospel crosses boundaries it transcends culture and so he brings the good news to her if you read through the bible you will find in jesus ministry he consistently goes out of his way to find and to love the unlovable in the world's eyes that's good news for you and i this morning because often if you're anything like me we're quite unlovable is there a culture that we've got a problem with a people that we've got a problem with a person that we've got a problem with and jesus can give us a transforming love that will make us go and love them you know there's the story of my gandhi you know gandhi the the famous hindu leader social worker it's a story that he almost became a christian in his autobiography he was apparently reading through the gospels and he was so impressed with jesus that he wanted to convert to christianity and so he thought christianity would be the the answer to the the caste system in india but he never became a christian why because of christians the story goes that he went to church one sunday to to learn more to to worship to find out about christianity and and baptism but he was stopped at the door refused a seat in that church and the person said go and worship with your own kind he left that church he never returned he wrote in his autobiography well then if christians have different castes i might as well remain a hindu jesus had no caste system in his heart his love transcended culture his love also transcended gender now we don't get that we don't get the nuance of it because we live in a world where there is equality in some ways but in this day in the day of jesus he was jesus and he was a man and he was a jew and she was a samaritan and these were huge differences how can you being a jew ask me a samaritan woman for a drink funny to our ears but that is what's happened even when his disciples come back late in the story they were surprised they marveled that he was talking to a woman we can't even understand that but women were subservient they they were they were kept hidden in the culture of the day rabbis instructed younger men not even to acknowledge their own female members of family in public in case they were

distracted from their study of the torah and eventually sent to hell you know it's extreme really extreme but that's how it was jesus did not care one jot about these social uh customs these customs that came in that were frankly ridiculous but he saw her as a person made in his image and in his likeness one of his created being somebody who was lost she lived in samaria she was immoral but she needed the truth and she needed his love and so he goes to her his love transcends culture his love transcends gender his love transcended character it wasn't just that she was a woman it wasn't just that she was a samaritan woman it was that she was living immorally with a man in the culture of the day that wasn't her husband that was a real shocker but jesus goes to her because he sees her need and he wants to show his love to her he points to the need he identifies the need he exposes the need to her and she recognizes that point hang on this is this is a prophet this is a woman who's been around a lot of men that's why she's come to the well at noon that's why she didn't come at morning light when everybody else came that's why she didn't come later in the day when all the other women were there because she wanted to avoid the dirty looks and the looks of derision and scorn but jesus came to meet her nobody's too low nobody's too far gone nobody's too marginalized nobody's too immoral for the love of jesus the savior on one hand you've got the religious leaders who would close their eyes rather than look at a woman in public and then you've got the savior who comes and meets with them at the well with love to show because this love transcends culture and gender and character so this morning if you feel isolated or marginalized or low down or that you've got it all wrong that you've made a mess of things know that jesus loves you and that he wants to come alongside you and he wants to refresh you and if you're up there if you're moral living and you're doing everything you can know too that that's never going to be enough but jesus loves you too he wants to come alongside you the need is universal jesus wants to bring you and supply you streams of living water the question is are you listening will you respond the need is universal secondly the task is formidable the task is formidable he came to a town in samaria called sychar near the plot of ground jacob had given to his son joseph jacob's well was there and jesus tired as he was from the journey sat down by the well the idea of the word here the picture that it captures he kind of flops down in exhaustion it was about noon it's hot he's been walking they've been traveling he is tired now samaria is not the kind of place that you would go for holiday for a bit of r and r it's just not that kind of place but they went there they're on foot it's dusty it's hot they're in the judean and samaritan hills they're weary they're exhausted they're hungry the disciples go away into the town to find something jesus says this is as far as i can go and he sits down tired tired as he was from the journey the son of god the word made flesh tired weary speaking to the humanity of jesus himself weary from the journey he sits down at the well he needed to go to samaria and going to samaria he wearied himself so here we have christ jesus tired weary why because he's in the pursuit of serving others and loving others you read the gospels you read the bible and you find that especially the gospel of

mark there's such a pace you know it's full on jesus was always surrounded by people there was crowds pressing against him he's working long hours he's into the night when he's not with his disciples he's with others when he's not with others he's discipling his disciples he's rarely got time alone unless he carves out early in the morning and goes to lonely places in order to pray and commune with his father but the point here is that even on the point of physical exhaustion jesus has still got time and is still willing to engage with the lost winston churchill i think it was that said the world is run by tired men men and women of course those who are tired i think there's truth to that uh kent hughes the um commentator said most souls are won by tired people the best sermons are preached by tired men the best camps are run by exhausted youth ministers the third world is evangelized by tired missionaries christian organizations are being run by tired men and women you show me a really great holiday holiday club vacation bible school and i'll show you some tired women we will never do great things for god until we have learned to minister when we are tired to do something great requires a lot of energy and here's the question off the back of that for us and for you this morning if you're a christian if you're a believer if you profess jesus as lord how often do you weary yourself in the pursuit of the lost how often have you been weary exhausted tired because you've gone to unusual places and unusual find yourself in unusual circumstances in order to show the love of jesus to those who are lost and broken and hard and calloused and cynical we don't have to go across the world maybe you just have to go across the living room you know to your family to your friends to your colleagues have you wearied yourself in the cause of the gospel because the world out there doesn't know it the culture that we live in doesn't know it it doesn't as ignorant in 1963 it took two to three hours for the world to hear about the death of john f kennedy when he was assassinated in 1999 it took the world just a few minutes to hear about the death of jfk when his plane went down in the atlantic it took minutes for the world to find out about the 9 legend and 9 11 tragedy i'm sure many of you know exactly where you were when that happened it took seconds last september for us to learn of queen elizabeth's passing well it's been 2 000 years since jesus died on the cross to forgive the sin of the world and even with all of the technology we have and even with all of the preaching that we offer there is still a community a world a society out there who do not know the truth of the gospel how weary are we as a result of trying to tell them jesus was tired he was weary from his journey why was he on that journey so that he might share the gospel with this woman we don't have to go across the world we don't have to go to samaria we just have to go across the road or across the room or across the office or across the pier or across the classroom or even at the mart through a few gates how weary are we the task is formidable and it will weary us but the lord will use the unlikely and the tired the need is universal the task is formidable thirdly the heart is blind the heart is insensible it's numb to its own condition that's why the task is so formidable because every human heart is hard we are all puffed up with pride we don't want to admit any weakness or any wrong doing and this encounter this transformation

[55 : 44] that occurs in this woman's life it comes about through a simple conversation but she still can't see her need she still can't see who's standing in front of her it's going right over her head just as it went right over the head of nicodemus what do you mean be born again do you have to enter them to your mother's womb a second time he didn't get it either but here's jesus talking to her about living water and in jewish vernacular what that meant was flowing water where is this flowing water a well was a stagnant stationary piece of waters where water was collected but it stood still jesus is saying i'll give you living streams rivers of water where is this stream she's saying where is it that i can i can get water from he's speaking of course about the inner refreshment of her soul as we sang in psalm 42 as pants the deer for streams of water so pants my soul for you my god my soul thirsts for god the living god where can i go and meet with god this evening god willing we're going to look at john 7 and the feast of booths the feast of tabernacles and during their observance of that the people would sing from isaiah 12 with joy you will draw from the wells of salvation and jesus is speaking here to one who is so thirsty but she can't see it and she doesn't know it and that hasn't changed there are people in this room today who are thirsty who are parched spiritually and yet you cannot see it you do not realize it you will not admit it but jesus can refresh you he can open the eyes of your heart and your mind and he can transform the experience that you have in your lives we live in a post-christian scotland it's post-christian people cannot see first corinthians paul speaks and he says the person without the spirit does not accept the things that come from the spirit of god but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they're discerned only through the spirit the average person in scotland in our society today would look at the christian church would look at those who worship jesus would look at you as you share the gospel with them wearied and tired before them as foolishness but if you're thirsty this morning the only thing that will truly quench your thirst is jesus because only he can give you living water you may be drinking from the stale stagnant broken cisterns of the world but if you are you will only get thirstier it will only make you sicker it will never truly fulfill you so if you're thirsty open the eyes open your eyes lift up your eyes see jesus the one who is offering living water and come to him and drink and drink and drink and satisfy yourselves the need is universal the task is formidable the heart is insensible the savior is capable finally as we conclude the savior is capable he can do it what we cannot do we cannot open the eyes of other people he can do it what he promises he can perform what he promises he will do what he promises he will fulfill he does it in the life of this woman everyone who drinks from this water will be thirsty again 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 every pursuit in this life everything that you pursue just as we said to the kids everything that you pursue in this life will come to nothing it will come up short it will satisfy for

a time and then it will wane and it will dissipate and it will pass away and you'll be on to the next thing and the next thing and the next thing and guess what the thirst will still be there it's like the sailor lost at sea water water all around not a drop to drink and they look and they start to drink and it just makes them sicker it it will take their lives eventually and the whole search for that begins when you're young doesn't it when we were kids where you're back at you you live by the if only syndrome if only if only i was a teenager you say when you're young i'd be able to do stuff i can't do just now and then you become a teacher teenager it's like oh if only i could drive if i could drive i could escape and i could go and see and then you drive and then you think oh if only i had my own house and then i could do my own thing and live my own way and not have to do what my parents say and anything oh if only i could find somebody to to to to love and to get married to and oh if only we could have children and oh if only i could get this job and if only and if only and if only and still there's something else and something else and something else it's like eating a mcdonald's for dinner you know at the time you're like oh yeah this is good and then 10 minutes later like well what's for dinner i'm starving still drink this water and you'll thirst again but not with jesus because he will satiate your soul the deepest longings of your heart he will fulfill the deepest need the deepest longing that you have and not only will he refresh you but he says it will be permanent refreshment then it will become a spring it will become the source of life and what that means is and we'll cover more of this tonight is that when you're saved it's not just about becoming satisfied but it's about them becoming the means by which others may be satisfied by becoming weary and going and telling people and sharing the living water that flows from within us because the search is over we've become a spring a fountain of living water in and through jesus and that hasn't come from anything that we've amassed anything that we've achieved anything that we've done but it comes because he offers it to us it's what he promises it's found in him the need is universal the task is formidable the heart is insensible but the savior is capable he is sufficient so i guess the question this morning is you're list are you listening to him will you receive him will you take what he offers you and will you know as this woman did true refreshment so that when you go back to your people when you go back to your town just as she did they'll be able to say they've been with jesus they are new let's go and see this jesus that she has met let's go with her i hope you will let's pray but our father we thank you for your word and we thank you for the promises that are contained within it we thank you for the example that is set forth for us and father we pray that we would indeed delight in jesus that we would see the need that there is that we would be willing to partner with you and in meeting that need and not just being satisfied but becoming servants also as we are satisfied through that spiritual refreshment offered in jesus that we would be those servants who would go into the world and who would dispense that very same truth and extend that very same invitation that others would come and drink and be made new and satisfied in christ we thank you for your word and we pray that you would speak into our hearts fill us with your refreshment this day we pray in jesus name amen folks we're going to conclude by

singing from the words of the hymn i heard the voice of jesus saying maybe particularly that second verse behold i freely give the living water thirsty one stoop down and drink and live i came to jesus and i drank of that life-giving stream my thirst was quenched my soul revived and now i live in him we'll sing these verses we'll stand to god's praise i heard the voice of jesus say come on to me and rest lay down the weary he walked lay down thy head upon my breast i came to jesus as i was weary and worn on sad i found in him a resting place and he he has made me glad i heard the voice of jesus say behold i freely give the living water thirsty one stoop down and drink and live i came to jesus and i drank of that life-giving stream my thirst was quenched my soul revived and now i live in him i heard the voice of jesus say i am this dark world's light look unto me look unto me look unto me thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright i look to jesus and i found in him my star my sun and in the light of life i'll walk till traveling days are done and now may the mercy the grace the peace the love of god father son and holy spirit rest and remain with us all now and evermore and all god's people say amen god and now may the curse on earth to your god and again lots of people say amen amen am am am is am am