

Thought for the day 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Prepared by Pat Basson

What a joy it's been day by day during this difficult time to open the computer, or phone, or for some of you see on paper the thoughts, musings, wise sayings, bible readings, prayers etc from so many different voices within our circuit. Perhaps too some of you have been accessing material from friends in other places or from different Christian organisations and charities who have sent emails. Certainly we have been receiving food for our souls on a far more regular basis and hopefully it is fattening us all up!

I know not all of you will have had the experience but some of us have been involved in "virtual" meetings and get-togethers via "Zoom" or "Team" and are getting more used to the way it all works, learning the pitfalls and how to avoid them - people appearing and disappearing, everybody starting to speak at once and then stopping to listen, except you've all stopped and there's silence! Andrew attached a wonderful picture the other day of "The Last Supper" as if it had happened via Zoom. There may be some hiccups with these "meetings" but there is something very helpful about being able to see the people on the other end of the line as well as hearing them. Body language tells us a great deal about how someone is feeling which may not necessarily be the same as what they're saying. A facial expression lets us know, usually, whether someone is serious or is pulling our leg, that twinkle in the eye or perhaps that sadness which cannot be hidden, it's why emails can sometimes be misinterpreted because that unspoken language is missing.

Throughout the New Testament we read of encounters between Jesus and different individuals, forgive me if I'm being sexist but the particular ones that spring to my mind are the woman who touched Jesus' cloak in the crowd, the woman caught in adultery and brought before Jesus, the woman who washed Jesus' feet with perfume and my favourite, the Samaritan woman at the well. In each incident Jesus looks deep into their souls, underneath the body language of fear, anguish, suffering or bravado and knows their deepest needs. In each case the encounter is life changing.

Many years ago a number of people from our circuit went to Launde Abbey for a weekend of teaching and fellowship, it was in the ministry of Rev Stephen Williams. I don't remember much about the weekend except for one particular session entitled "Healing of the Memories".

As we sat quietly Stephen asked us to think about a situation that had caused us pain. We were invited to imagine sitting in a room with Jesus - just Jesus and me - to tell Jesus what had happened - then to ask the person who had caused the hurt to come into the room and be with the two of us - then to ask Jesus to enable me to let go of the hurt, to forgive the person and to receive healing of the memory. It's not

necessary to share with you, the reader, the exact details of this encounter except that for me it was life changing as Jesus looked deep into my soul.

When times are difficult we often feel that we need to hide our true feelings from others, we don't want to burden them with our worries, our fears for ourselves, our families and friends or what the future holds for any of us.

There is no need to pretend with Jesus, He sees our very souls and knows what is really going on - and He loves us no matter what is there! There is no worry He cannot carry, no darkness He cannot light up, no fear He cannot calm, no hurt He cannot heal. Just see Him sitting with you and let Him bless you.

I invite you to read John 4: 4-26 "The Woman at the Well" - The Message

*Jesus came into Sychar, a Samaritan village that bordered the field Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob's well was still there. Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon. A woman, a Samaritan, came to draw water. Jesus said, "Would you give me a drink of water?" (His disciples had gone to the village to buy food for lunch.) The Samaritan woman, taken aback, asked, "How come you, a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (Jews in those days wouldn't be caught dead talking to Samaritans.) Jesus answered, "If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking me for a drink, and I would give you fresh, living water." The woman said, "Sir, you don't even have a bucket to draw with, and this well is deep. So how are you going to get this 'living water'? Are you a better man than our ancestor Jacob, who dug this well and drank from it, he and his sons and livestock, and passed it down to us?" Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst - not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life." The woman said, "Sir, give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty, won't ever have to come back to this well again!" He said, "Go call your husband and then come back." "I have no husband," she said. "That's nicely put: 'I have no husband.' You've had five husbands, and the man you're living with now isn't even your husband. You spoke the truth there, sure enough." "Oh, so you're a prophet! Well, tell me this: Our ancestors worshipped God at this mountain, but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place for worship, right?" "Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem. You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God's way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming - it has, in fact, come - when what you're called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter. It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for, those who are simply and honestly themselves*

*before him in their worship.. God is sheer being itself - Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration." The woman said, "I don't know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we'll get the whole story." "I am he," said Jesus. "You don't have to wait any longer or look any further."*

Let's use hymn 544 in Singing the Faith as a prayer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBppKZOeJlQ&list=PL37UjspluA2ARrfadJPskIKNuYOMRDi0O&index=2&t=0s>

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.  
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.  
You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield.  
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.

I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy.  
You alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.  
You alone.....

You're my friend and you are my brother, even though you are a king.  
I love you more than other, so much more than anything.  
You alone...

Martin J Mystrom

I hope you will be able to watch a video now, entitled "Jesus loves: Woman at the Well" produced by The Skit Guys to close this "Thought for the Day".

<https://skitguys.com/videos/jesus-loves-woman-at-the-well>

(Andrew: please note: You can watch the 'preview' without needing to purchase the video. The 'preview' is the full video).