

“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?” John 4:10-11 (NIV)

This passage is often drawn upon due to the fact that Jesus takes time to talk to sit and talk with the town's most sinful woman who isn't even a Jew. This is shocking for the time, but that isn't the bit that I'm focusing on as we have discussed before how Jesus often chooses those who the world thinks of as 'lesser than' or second class citizens as the ones He gives the message of life to.

Today I want to think about the phrase 'living water'. Water gives and sustains life. Humans need it, animals need it, plants need it. Nothing in creation can survive without water, but Jesus is talking about a much more powerful type of life sustaining and giving water - himself. We all need to have the normal water to not dehydrate but the water that is Jesus is so much more than a substance we drink to not physically dehydrate...it stops us from dehydrating spiritually. Jesus talks of being the vine and we are sustained as the branches (see John 15:5-8) and He reminds us that we wither away if we are not connected to Him. That means the life sustaining water runs through Him and into us. If we remain connected to Jesus we won't die and wither away and will be full of the life He came to give us - life in all its fullness (John 10:10b).

But that's all very well and good, but how do we actually drink this living water? What can we do to keep from detaching from the vine and withering away into nothingness?

First of all, the water is given free as a gift from Jesus...I believe it is always flowing, we just have to choose to actually drink it. Drinking is a physical action, it calls us to take the initiative. You don't just drink a cup of tea (coffee, hot chocolate, juice, etc...) without making a choice to get a cup to drink from and then physically putting the cup to your lips to drink from it. So assuming our bodies, minds and spirits are the vessels that we want to fill up, and Jesus pouring out the Spirit is the living water we are trying to fill our vessels with...what are our actions we need to take to be able to collect the water? Simply put, we need to spend time reading and studying the bible, we need to spend time in prayer...both telling God our needs but also, more importantly, listening for the answers and things we need to know. If writing is your thing then engaging with God's word by writing down how He talks to us is another way. For those who enjoy singing, praising God in song is wonderful and doesn't need to be kept to Sundays. Using crafts that we do each day can quieten our minds to be clear enough for us to hear what God wants to say to us. Even just listening to christian music on streaming sites or listening to the worship and teaching on christian radio shows such as UCB1, UCB2 or Premier Christian Radio helps us to keep God at the forefront of our minds.

Just to finish off briefly, we also need to remember that this living water never stops flowing and there's enough for the whole world to consume what they need each day and there still be more coming...so how can we direct the water that overflows from us towards those that do not currently get to drink from the living water that they may, in time, learn to directly drink from the living water themselves?

Pray;

Lord of life, we pray today for the living water you provide to become our priority in life. Please help us to fill ourselves up with this water you provide and then to let it overflow to those we meet in our daily lives. Help us to create and keep to routines that mean we always have time for you in our lives. Help us to learn to be open to you. Help us to not be scared of the silence in which you often speak. Help us to fill more of our time with you, the true vine and living water without which we will wither and die spiritually. Amen.