

Message For August 20, 2017

Your Spiritual Selfie

John 4:7-10, 13-26 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁷ Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸ He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

⁹ The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

¹⁰ Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

¹³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

¹⁵ “Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

¹⁶ “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband— ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!”

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet. ²⁰ So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?”

²¹ Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will

worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus told her, “I AM the Messiah!”

It’s common to find people and groups separating “Grace and Truth” but it’s quite clear that Jesus came bringing both. In fact, keeping them together is one of the more important things we do in living out our faith.

Christian Psychologist Henry Cloud writes, truth without grace is just judgment. And Grace without truth is license.

In other words, almost anything goes in terms of life or thought. This is the “cheap grace” that Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote about in his classic, *The Cost of Discipleship*.

In legalism, there are rules and regulations, dos and don’ts, laws and legalities, but no grace. When there is truth without grace, there is only judgment and condemnation.

Only authentic Christianity brings together both truth and grace. Which isn’t surprising considering that this is precisely what Jesus came to bring.

Jesus accepted the woman at the well in what can only be deemed by any careful reader in (then) culturally scandalous ways, but followed the acceptance by challenging her directly about her promiscuity.

In chapter 8 John tells us that Jesus stopped the stoning of a woman caught in adultery, made it clear He was not going to condemn her, but then pointedly admonished her to stop hooking up.

Grace and truth flowed from Jesus.

We need grace because we need acceptance and forgiveness.

We need to cut each other slack. Learn and then practice extending Grace.

And we need truth because we need life-change and direction.

Here's some homework for all of us... It's not due next Sunday or even the week after.

You'll hand it in at the end of your life and until then...

Fill up on Grace and Truth, apply it to yourself, and extend it to others.

John writes in his Gospel:

John 1:14 New Century Version (NCV)

¹⁴ The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw His glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father—and He was full of GRACE and TRUTH.

Get rid of a feel-good theology that airbrushes sin, and drop any legalistic attitudes of condemnation and judgment.

Every now and then... take a Spiritual Selfie

Fill up on Grace and Truth.

Remember who you are and to whom you belong

AMEN