

Mar 12 2023.CoffeetoGo.Lent3.editedaudio

Thu, Mar 09, 2023 11:41AM • 16:40

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

jesus, woman, christ, scripture, lent, week, called, unfamiliar, karin, borders, relationships, city, worship, speaking, talking, person, samaritans, community, living, disciples

SPEAKERS

Josh Mangelson, Blake Smith, Karin Peter

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Karin Peter 00:28

Welcome to Coffee to Go where we center ourselves in the seasons and holy days and scriptures of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter, your host, and or co-host, I should say. And our other co-host is Blake Smith. And we're happy to have you with us for this part of the journey with Jesus. So the big question, "where are we with Jesus this week?", and we are in Lent, this is the third week of Lent. And we are on our journey towards Jerusalem. So, the scriptures during Lent, as you may have noticed, call us to a broader awareness of how we are living as followers of Jesus. What is this really look like to walk with Jesus? Now the word Lent comes out from this like old English word that was a, a shortened version of lengthening. And it kind of has this idea of the lengthening of days that happens in the northern hemisphere and lent came out of that kind of core word. As the days grow longer and more light is experienced. As we journey towards Jerusalem we learn more and more light is experienced, as we pray and fast and enter into spiritual reflection. As a people during Lent, there is a lengthening, of understanding in our relationship with God, with others, with the earth. And it's all illuminated through this process of walking with Jesus. So today, we're traveling with Jesus and we're heading toward is it Sychar? A Samaritan city we are traveling with Jesus and we are in an area that is not his normal territory. We've gone to a smart city and we have stopped at a place called Jacob's well. And here at Jacob's well. Jesus enters into a conversation with a local woman. Now this was not a place where Jews would normally be found. And he would not be talking to people from this culture. That's just not what good Jewish boys did. And particularly be talking to a woman, any woman was not something a Jewish man should be doing in public. So in this little vignette here of Scripture, we are crossing some borders, religious borders, ethnic borders, and social borders. So like what's our Scripture today?

Blake Smith 03:06

Our scripture comes from John chapter four, beginning with the fifth verse. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son, Joseph. Jacob's well was there. And Jesus, tired out by his journey was sitting by the well. It was about noon, a Samaritan

woman came to draw water. And Jesus said to her, give me a drink. His disciples had gone to the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, how is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me? A woman of Samaria? Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans? Jesus answered her, if you knew the gift of God, and who it was that was saying to you give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. And the woman said to him, Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor, Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it. Jesus said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again. But those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life. The woman said to him, Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water. Jesus said to her, Go, call your husband and come back. The woman answered him, I have no husband. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying, I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true. The woman said to him, Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem. Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father, neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth. For the Father seeks such as these to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and truth. The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming, who is called Christ, when He comes, He will proclaim all things to us. And Jesus said to her, I am he the one who is speaking to you. Just then his disciples came, they were astonished that he was speaking with a woman. But no one said, What do you want? Or why are you speaking with her? Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done. He could not be the Messiah, can he? Many Samaritans from that city, believed in him, because of the woman's testimony. He told me everything I have ever done. Imagine going to a well, middle of the day, because you can't go when the rest of the women go, you're not a part of the group. You're not welcome. You go by yourself. Not only you meet a man there, but that man tells you everything about yourself, and helps you to see something new. I'm not sure, quite honestly, if it were me, in such a brief encounter with someone... maybe the answer is in the fact that it was Jesus. And so you know that there was some sense the Holy Spirit making it known to her. But my thought is, I'm going to take my barrel and come back later. I don't want anybody to know me that well, right. So yeah, but even more important in the Scripture is, is that this, this woman was with somebody other. Again, she was she was coming in the middle of the day, because she didn't fit in, she wasn't accepted by the other women in our community. And so she couldn't come in the earlier part of the day, it was a long walk, it was hot. She was other and we all have others in our life. I mean, we may think we're the most inclusive person that ever existed. And we don't have a problem with anybody but deep down, because of our upbringing, the relationships we've had, the encounters we've had with others, there's always others. Those we have isolated as being different than me. And perhaps less worthy, less deserving of my time and attention. Lent is a time to examine what is driving these borders, what's creating the borders and walls of division? Why do we use language that is "us and them," distinguishing that there are those who are other than us. I can only speak for myself Karin, but you know, I have people that are others is as inclusive as I want to be. And I'd like to at least think that it's not out of some self righteous sense, but we're just different, right? But I wonder if that's some kind of false piety. We're using the idea of

others so that we can avoid bad people are bad places as a measuring stick of our own goodness, sometimes I think. So, in this scripture, here, we have Jesus, who looks at the commonalities, and takes away all that difference, and "other." I mean, there were so many levels of other there in that interaction, and yet Jesus breaks down all of those borders, it gives us a model to say we're all kind of called to the same table.

Karin Peter 09:40

So I love the part when the disciples come back and it says, Nobody said, Why is he talking to her, which tells you that they're thinking, "why is he talking to her?" The writer of the gospel is thinking, why is he talking to her? So I think I think we have those questions sometime in our own life, but I can see some ways that we can experience this scripture this Lenten scripture this week. We can make an effort to connect with somebody that I have, that you have differences with. Think about someone with whom you have differences and try to find where you can find a point of common ground. It's hard to do, you have to exercise that humility we talked about on Ash Wednesday. But that's one way to take this scripture and make it real this week. Another might be to reflect on a strained or broken relationship and the person with whom you are at odds, and identify, think about that person and identify three positive attributes of the person. Now, I think maybe for a five minute period of meditation, you can focus on those attributes, it might take five minutes for me to think of the three attributes of someone with whom I have a problem with, but I'm going to really try to do this. And to meditate and focus on those attributes and how those attributes in that person, bring blessing into the world. When other ways to be prayerful, for God's Spirit, for divine light, for spiritual presence, whatever you want to call it, to allow you to be surprised by somebody this week. It's always amazing when I have preconceived ideas on how somebody is going to act or how that conversation is going to go. And I'm totally surprised by that person. And by the conversation, the woman at the well was totally surprised by that conversation. And look for opportunities to experience something that's unfamiliar to you culturally, or ethnically, a tradition, a religious practice, a type of food you haven't tried before, or even some words from a language with which you are unfamiliar, but try to put yourself in a situation where you are experiencing something unfamiliar and allow yourself to be open to that. All of those are ideas of ways that we can live out this particular scripture in our own life this week.

Blake Smith 12:08

I especially like that last one Karin. I know that when I was in seminary and setting, we had to do an immersion. And so I spent a week living in a homeless shelter with some of my colleagues. And the purpose of that is, you know, from our place of privilege, we think we have the answers of what that community needs. And in the church, we do that. We'll write them a check, or we'll, we'll collect blankets, or we'll do this. And there's something about going and living in their midst. And building relationships and talking to them and understanding what their life's about. And I can no longer make comments like, oh, they always go get a job, or, gosh, they're homeless and dirty, they just like to be dirty. So I really liked that looking for opportunities to experience an unfamiliar culture, or, you know, just sit down with somebody and, and ask them. The reality is, where we are, you don't have to go too far and find someone of a different culture or a different perspective or a different belief, but go with an open heart humility, to listen. So we ask ourselves simple questions, who is the other to me? How do I cross the borders to find a path to communication and understanding? Another piece of that is, am I willing to cross, you know, cross the borders to find a path? Because I'm pretty comfortable where I am.

A second one would be, what relationships of my need tending this Lenten season? How will I nurture healing and reconciliation? There might be people in our lives that, that we don't consider other. But because of something we've said or done or not done, we've made them feel like other. Now, here's a big one that might step on some toes because social media is so prominent for us. But I think a question for us to ask is, do my social media posts, my conversations, my actions contribute to social or religious divisions? And do they reflect my desire to move toward Jesus the peaceful one, the Reconciler and restorer of all?

Karin Peter 14:22

That's a tough one. Yeah, yeah. To separate out our social media life from the rest of us that really...

Blake Smith 14:30

reflecting on that, and how do those how do those things reflect our desire to move toward Jesus the peaceful one. So I want to leave us with a blessing this week that is connected to another feast day, St. Patrick's Day, and no, the feast in the liturgical calendar is not about feasting on corned beef and cabbage, although many of us may do that for St. Patrick's Day, St. Patrick is one of our patron saints. And this blessing comes from St. Patrick. And it's traditionally sung as As a him on this day, Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lay down price when I sit down Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every one who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me, you know, if we could see Christ in everyone, it would make it more difficult for us to place them in the category of other. We hope you've enjoyed this episode. I know I have enjoyed being with you, Karin and we just invite all of you to join us here again at Coffee to Go for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.

Josh Mangelson 16:13

Thanks for listening to Project Zion Podcast. Project Zion Podcast is a Ministry of Community of Christ. The views and opinions expressed in this episode are of those speaking and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Community of Christ. The music has been graciously provided by Dave Hines