

Children's Moment

March 26, 2014

Theme: **SLIDE** Living Water

Object: Pitcher of Water and Glass

Scripture: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.'" (John 4:13-14 NASB)

Ah yes, cool, refreshing water! (Pour yourself a glass of water and take a drink.) Do you drink a lot of water? Of course, that depends on how hot it is and whether we are doing a lot of running and playing. And there are other things to drink besides water. Sometimes I like to have a glass of milk-especially with cookies, and I may drink iced tea if I am eating a hamburger, but there is no substitute for water when you are hot and thirsty.

SLIDE The part of the world where Jesus lived was very hot and dry. One day, as He was traveling through Samaria, Jesus passed through a small village. Jacob's well was there and Jesus, hot and tired from the long walk, sat down beside the well about noontime to rest. Soon a Samaritan woman came to the well to fill her water jar. **SLIDE** "Please give me a drink," Jesus said to the woman. The woman was shocked! You see, in those days a Jew wouldn't be caught dead talking to a Samaritan. "Why are you, a Jew, asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?"

Jesus answered, "If you knew who it is who is asking you for a drink, you would ask him for a drink and he would give you living water. Everyone who drinks from this well will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I give will never thirst."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have

to keep coming to this well to draw water." She didn't understand that the "living water" was to believe that Jesus was the Savior.

"Go and get your husband and bring him here," Jesus told the woman.

"I don't have a husband," she replied.

"You are right," Jesus answered. "You have had five husbands and the man you are living with now is not your husband."

SLIDE "You must be a prophet because you know everything I have done," the woman said. Then Jesus explained to her that He was the Messiah. The woman was so excited that she ran into the village and told her friends, "Come and see a man that told me everything I have done. Surely he must be the Christ."

Because of what the woman told them, many Samaritans came to know Jesus and accept His offer of living water. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

Ah yes, cool refreshing water! (Take a drink.) It refreshes the body, but it can't compare to the "Living Water" that Jesus gives. It refreshes our soul!

Dear Jesus, as the deer longs for streams of water, so do we long for you, the living water. Amen.

Slide Jesus Christ's Claim

It is good to ask questions. My mom said that my first word as a baby was “Why?” However, there is no point in asking questions if the question does not lead us to an answer or if we are not willing to listen to the answer. Only a fool asks questions just to ask questions. As a child I asked “Why?” because everything was new and I wanted to know why and how things are - in the world I was born into. Still to this day I ask questions because I want to know “Why?”

Slide Three Questions

In this section of John chapter seven there are three important questions asked by groups of people. Yet, not one of these questions is answered. We will examine these questions, not for the sake of the questions, but for the answers. The answers will help us understand who Christ is and our relationship to Him.

The **Slide** first question is found in verse 25, look in your bibles, “So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, **Slide** ‘Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?’” This question is asked by a group of people who had knowledge of the affairs of Jerusalem. The general population was not aware of the plans of the Jewish leaders to kill Jesus. However, there were those that we would say were - “in the know” and they are puzzled why Jesus is being allowed to teach. They did not understand why the Jewish leaders did not act. Perhaps, these Jewish leaders secretly feared debating Jesus in the open – they might have known they would lose and this would be devastating to them and publicly hurt their standing as leaders. Maybe they feared Jesus’ popularity with the masses, for at this point He was still very popular. The Apostle John does not answer this question, but the answer is

obvious – **Slide** “Yes, this is Jesus, the one they wanted dead.” This answer shows us that the hearts of men are corrupted by sin and desperately needs a Savior. History and the scriptures clearly demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ or the Savior mankind desperately needs. Seneca who lived from 4 BC to 65 AD was a Roman philosopher and tutor to emperor Nero. He was forced to commit suicide for joining in the plot to assassinate Nero. His elder brother Gallio is mentioned in Acts 18:12 to 15. As Seneca matured in age, thought and wisdom he wrote many things embraced by early Christians. His view of leaders, including himself, and their attempts to hold onto their power, he wrote, **Slide** “We are always complaining that our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end.” These Jewish leaders hoarded their days and power and lived oblivious power-drunk lives thinking their self-seeking power would not come to an end. Sounds like some of the political leaders today. As Christians we know that every day is a gift and should be used with purpose. Now, we press on.

The **Slide** **second question** we want to explore follows in verse 26, “Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. **Slide** The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?” The reasoning of the prior question posed in verse 25 forms this question. “Do the rulers know that Jesus is the Christ?” The answer is **Slide** “No they do not.” The reason they do not know Jesus is the Christ is because of their ambition - they did not want to know. These Jewish leaders are indicative of the lost state of all men and women then and throughout history. This is why Jesus explained in Matthew, **Slide** “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” (Matthew 13:13 NASB) Even the parables did not penetrate the hearts of those who had hardened their heart towards God because of their ambitions and their sins. **Blank**

Verse 27 explains why some of the people rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Reading verse 27, “However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.” This statement is a mixture of ignorance and tradition. The tradition was based on the misinterpretation of verses like, **Slide** “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple...” (Malachi 3:1a NASB) Tradition held that the Messiah would be unknown until He suddenly appeared in the Temple and redeemed Israel from its enemies. Justin Martyr the second century historian wrote, **Slide** “But Christ – if he has indeed been born, and exists anywhere – is unknown and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all.” (Dialogue with Trypho 8) **Blank** Since the people knew where Jesus was born, knew His family and His background – He could therefore, NOT be the Messiah. Of course, this tradition ran contrary to Old Testament teaching that said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Some of the crowd later remembered the Old Testament scriptures for they said in verse 42, **Slide** “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” The Pharisees who taught the people should have known what the prophet Micah wrote, **Slide** “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah (אֶפְרַתָּה *’ēf-rawth*), too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.” (Micah 5:2 NASB) Holding true to the scriptures and not falling into the traditions of men has been a problem since the time of Moses until this very day. **Blank** Even though the tradition was false, Jesus does not take the time to correct these people. Instead He confronts their hard hearts and their unbelief. We will look at the condition of unbelief once we have answered the third question.

This **Slide** **third question** is asked by a different group, which appears to believe that

Jesus is the Messiah. In verse 31 we read, “But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, **Slide** “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?” The answer, which John does not give, is **Slide** “No, he will not.” Since no one had up to the time Jesus walked the earth and no one since Jesus was resurrected and no one in the future will be able to perform miracles or signs greater than Jesus – the conclusion is Jesus is the Christ. **Slide** Do you believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior? This is the bottom line for all people throughout history. The Jews are looking for the first coming of the Messiah – can they possibly hope that their future Messiah will come and he will be able to do more than Jesus did? Again the answer is NO! And again this leaves us with the conclusion the Jesus is the Christ. Do you believe this? Are you living out the believing that Jesus is the Christ?

Slide Jesus’ Claim to be the Christ

Jesus alone has fulfilled the Scriptures. Mathematically for Jesus to have fulfilled every prophecy of the Old Testament as determined by mathematicians is **Slide** 1 in 10 to the 157th power – your odds of winning the lottery is far greater than this – your odds of being killed by a meteorite is greater than this. With this statistic in mind one can see the truth when Jesus said, **Slide** “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.” (Matthew 5:17 NASB) This is why Jesus could state with complete confidence, **Slide** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (John 14:6 NASB) The world sees Christians as narrow-minded because we accept the Scriptures as absolute truth, and we do this with legitimate reasons, and we disregard the ever-changing teachings of the world. Jesus’ claim to be the Christ is based on the proved reliability of the Scriptures and His fulfillment of the Scriptures. The claim of the world that Jesus was

just a “good man”, but not God – is based on what evidence? None really. The Scriptures, truth, history, math and empirical science are all on the side of Christians. As Christians we are called to stand for the truth of the Scriptures given by God and this puts us at odds with the world. **Blank**

A point in case is the conflict between **Slide** Arius (*Ari-us*) and Athanasius (*a-thə-'nā-zh(ē-)əs*). Arius lived in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries and taught against the concept of the Trinity and declared that Christ was not the eternal Son of God, but a subordinate being. Arius and the teaching of the Trinity were the primary topics of the **Slide** Council of Nicea in 325 AD. Arius was strongly opposed by Athanasius. Prior to the Council of Nicea the opposition caused Athanasius to be exiled. He was later summoned before the emperor of Rome Theodosius, who demanded he cease his opposition to Arius. The emperor frustrated with their discussion finally asked, “Do you not realize that all the world is against you?” Athanasius quickly answered, **Slide** “Then I am against all the world.” Has history not made it clear that as Christians we are against the world and the evil one who has temporary reign over it? We are not to love what they love – we are to love the lost, but we are not to embrace their ideas, ethics or lifestyles. This is exactly what Jesus now does as we return to our study passage. **Blank**

Jesus now publicly tells all who He is and that most, the Jewish leaders in particular, do not know God. In verses 28 and 29 we read, “**Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, ‘You both know Me and know where I am from.’**” When one looks at verse 19 of chapter 8 in the Gospel of John, which says, **Slide** “**You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.**” We can deduce that here in verse 28 Jesus is speaking with irony for He certainly would not contradict Himself. **Blank** Now continuing in verse 28 of chapter 7, “**I have not come**

of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.” (Again, this statement confirms what Jesus says in John 8:19) Finishing with verse 29, “I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.”” We must understand that believing in an incarnate God, in Jesus as the Messiah, was **not** easy for the Jews at the time of Christ. Look how hard it is for people today that have the advantage of history and both the Old and New Testaments. The Jews had a strong dislike for the Greeks and Romans with their multiple gods. Jews for centuries were raised to believe in monotheism – one God. In the synagogues Pharisees declared, **Slide** “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” (Deuteronomy 6:4 NASB) Here comes Jesus performing miracles and teaching that there is One God, but with three personalities and that He is God incarnate. This teaching was earth shattering to the Jews. Yet, Jesus convinced many that what He taught was true. Jesus has continued to convince millions and millions since His death that He is God in the flesh and He alone has the answers to the problems of men and women throughout the world and He alone is able to forgive sins. The secular world’s opinion in its self-seeking ambition and skepticism works hard against the evidence that Jesus is God in order to not have to be accountable to God for their sinful lusts and lifestyles. Yet, we know from the Scriptures that these unbelievers will be held accountable before God’s righteous judgment and His judgment is eternal.

Slide Revolution of Christ

Let me ask you, if Jesus is not the Christ – how is it that He is the only person to have launched the only lasting social revolution in the history of mankind? Jesus brought social change that has impacted every generation and influenced every government since He lived. Christ’s teachings have changed slavery, the status of women, brought the end of gladiator contests of death for amusement, sacrificing of people – Jesus changed the course of history and continues to do so. Much of our present day Law

is based on the scriptures and the teachings of Jesus – even though they are being eroded. This change for the better did not happen all at once, in the early days of preaching the gospel many were fortunate to be able to finish without being hurt or killed. But as time progressed the life of our risen Lord took hold in people’s hearts and with it came change that has blessed people wherever Jesus has been embraced. A new way of life, a new set of ethics and a new reason for living was created. Laws were enacted that protected the innocent. Christians performed charitable deeds to serve others as a way of life. Christians shared the saving gospel of Christ wherever they traveled. America was blessed as it was founded on many Christian principles – principles that are now being eroded and there is now and will be in the future a price to pay. We are to live as Paul wrote to the Colossians who suffered persecution, **Slide** “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” (Colossians 2:7 NASB) My dear brothers and sisters, it is the Scriptures, the Scriptures and the Scriptures - they alone are our guide to living life.

Slide Jesus the Great Emancipator

We refer to Abraham Lincoln as the “Great Emancipator” in American history for freeing the slaves. Jesus is the “Great Emancipator” of all people - past, present and future, those who are living in bondage to sin. Isaiah chapter 61 verse 1 has been fulfilled in Jesus, as our Lord proclaimed in the synagogue in Nazareth as He read of Himself, **Slide** “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He (*God the Father*) has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners.” It is estimated that as much as 1/3 of the world was held in bondage or slavery at the

time of Christ. Because of the influence of Jesus throughout history – we now see that slavery has become the exception, not the rule. Slavery is outlawed and considered wrong in almost every country on earth. What has history shown about the influence of Jesus on the world spiritually? Millions upon millions have been freed from the slavery of sin. Some were slaves to alcohol or drugs - some to pride, ambition and lust or any number of debilitating problems – Jesus and only Jesus has freed people of every generation from these terrible sins. Through Christ people live lives of peace, joy, goodness and honor. **Blank**

Slide Jesus the Redeemer

In the great civil war to free men from the terrible sin of owning other men as slaves there is a story of President Lincoln as a redeemer. It is the story of a young man named, **Slide** William Scott. William joined Company K of the Vermont Infantry and his unit was encamped at the Chain Bridge near Washington D.C. William was on guard duty and found asleep at his post on **Slide** August 31, 1861. He was tried and court-martialed, found guilty and **Slide** sentenced to be executed. In William's defense, he had volunteered that night to take the place of a comrade who was ill and he had been on duty before as well and was exhausted. His commanding officer appealed the court-martial and asked for clemency to no avail. His story was placed in the newspaper but this changed nothing - he was still to be executed. His family was brokenhearted and his younger sister went to the Whitehouse determined to see the President. When she told her story to the guard at the entrance to the Whitehouse he escorted her to the President's assistant who in turn got the President to see her. On September 9th William was to be executed. He was pronounced guilty and his death sentence was read. When this was done the **Slide** pardon by President Lincoln was read sparing his life. William served faithfully and fought bravely with his

regiment until the Battle of Lee's Mill when **Slide** he died on April 17, 1862.

President Lincoln spared William's life and restored him, but we do not know William's eternal fate. Jesus redeems us and restores us to God the Father who guarantees our eternal position with Him. Jesus is the "Great Emancipator." He is our "Redeemer."

Slide Jesus the Healer

Remember God the Father sent Jesus, God the Son as found in Isaiah 61:1 where we read, **Slide** "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He (*God the Father*) has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners." Those of us who are saved can look back and see we were living afflicted with broken hearts. We may not have known it before Christ saved us, but we certainly clearly see this now. And, if we did know we were living with broken hearts before Christ saved us – we had no idea of what the solution was. Christ has been mending broken hearts for thousands of years and He never fails – is it not time you let Him heal your broken heart? Come to Him and rest and know peace.

Oswald Chambers said it well, **Slide** "Faith for my deliverance is not faith in God. Faith means, whether I am visibly delivered or not, I will stick to my belief that God is love. There are some things only learned in a fiery furnace." Lives lived by faith, live lives that stay true to God the Father, Jesus Christ, God the Son and our Lord and to the Scriptures that God gave so we might know Him. Live lives of service. These are things of the life of a Christian.

If you want to know Jesus as your Savior come to me and we will pray together, rejoice together for the new creation Jesus has made you.