

Our lives are filled with questions: questions that we ask or that people ask us, questions about the future especially with the election and the current economic conditions. Some questions are more important than others. The answers to some questions can shape our lives. This morning we are setting out on a new series that will try to answer some of life's biggest question.

We begin today with "Why Am I Here?" The answer to the question may actually be another question. That is what are you seeking, what are you pursuing in life? People pursue a lot of things ranging from a dream to a relationships, from money to happiness. Whatever you're looking for in life reflects your heart, your heart's desire. Jesus said, "Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be." (Matthew 6:21 NLT)

A lot of people are on a spiritual journey in a world full of choices. In recent years celebrities like Madonna and Tom Cruise have made the Kabala and Scientology popular. Walk into the Borders bookstore and look at the "Spiritual" section. You will find books on a whole wide range of spiritual topics from witchcraft to eastern mysticism, from the Torah to the book of Mormon. Unfortunately not all spiritual journeys take us to the same place. The do it yourself path leads nowhere. Only faith in Jesus Christ gives us the gift of eternal life.

Did you know, that while people are looking for God, He is looking for us? Jesus said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." (Luke 19:10 NLT) We see that today in the account of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus was making a return trip to Judah in the northern part of the nation of Israel. In between Israel and Judah was the territory of the Samaritans. Most Jewish people refused to go through Samaria because they thought the Samaritans were half breeds that had distorted the Jewish faith. So they usually traveled on the east side of the Jordan River, to avoid Samaria. Not Jesus. Not this time.

John tells us that Jesus had to go through Samaria. Why? Because He had an appointment to keep with the Samaritan woman at the well. She didn't know about it, but Jesus did. He was waiting for her when she came to the well in the middle of the day to draw water. Jesus was waiting for the disciples who had gone into the village. The woman came in the middle of the day to avoid meeting any of the other women who drew their water from the well earlier in the morning. She must have been shocked when Jesus, a Jewish man, spoke to her, a Samaritan woman. That just didn't happen. But Jesus was there seeking the woman, looking for the opportunity to meet her deeper needs.

During the course of the conversation, Jesus told the woman that He could give her living water. At first the woman didn't know what he meant. But she may have remembered what God had said through the Prophet Jeremiah, "For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me—the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns

that can hold no water at all!” (Jeremiah 2:13) She may have thought that Jesus was going to lower the hammer on her, that he was going to blast her for her sinful past.

Jesus knew her story and he knows our stories, too. He knows those secrets that we try to hide in the past. He knows those struggles that we face and don't want anyone else to find out about. He knows us, sees beyond our sin and offers us a new way of life. He offers us love, forgiveness and acceptance. It must have been breaking news for the woman at the well as she talked with Jesus. She expected the law, but got the Gospel. When the woman learned that Jesus was the Promised Savior, she discovered that He came to bring her God's love and not to condemn her. That is still breaking news for people today because so many people do not know or believe that God enters our world to love us and give us life.

One of the problems that people face when they set out on a spiritual journey that brings them to God is that the truth about their life is exposed. It happened with the woman at the well when Jesus said that she was right in saying that she didn't have a husband because she had been married five times and was living with a man that she wasn't married to. So she tried to change the subject, tried to side track Jesus. So she asked a question about where was the right place to worship, in Jerusalem or Samaria. Jesus told her that worship wasn't dependant on the place but on the heart. It is too easy to use religious conflict and controversy to keep us from asking the most important questions.

What kind of questions are you asking? If you are only asking questions to keep you from seeing the truth, you may need to ask some different questions. But if you're asking questions about why am I here, what is my purpose in life, then these questions will keep you on track. After Jesus answered the questions of the woman at the well, she left to tell others about Jesus. She knew that they were looking for the same things.

So why are we here? What are you pursuing in life? Once Jesus asked, “Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6:25 NLT) Then he went on to say, “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” (verse 33) You see, we aren't here to serve our selves. We aren't here to gain a lot of stuff for ourselves. We are here because God created us and gave us life. We are here to worship the one true God who restores us to his family through faith in Jesus Christ. What are you here? Think about that as you watch a coach ask that all important question.

Video Clip from *Facing the Giants*. The coach asks a second time why they play football.

Your questions are important and deserve an answer. Join us next weekend as we ask the question, “Why should I trust the Bible?” You can also join us for the Adult Bible class as we address some of the other “Stormy Questions” of life. Amen.

