

## COME TO THE WELL

During our recent trip to Haiti, one message came to us again and again. *“Keep yourself hydrated.”* I understand it was in the nineties for a couple days here. I didn’t know what the temp was there since there were no signs broadcasting the time and temperature – and I had the data turned off on my cell phone. When I asked Franzo at *Ken be Fem* what the temperature was, he just said, *“It’s very hot.”* I found out later it ranged from 85-95° F with 65-75% humidity every day.

Though the Haitian people did not seem to be bothered by it, our team found the sweltering heat to be physically draining. The least amount of exertion had us soaked in sweat. It seemed that whatever I drank seeped out of my pores nearly as fast I took it in - and I drank a lot.

I usually only had 2 small cups of coffee at breakfast, which for many of you would be more than enough, but I’m used to at least a pot a day, so I felt like I was on pretty low rations. What I did have a lot of though, was bottled water. Our hosts from *Builders w/o Borders* supplied the team with a cooler filled with it every day, as well as a few bottles of Coca Cola. I pretty much stopped drinking carbonated beverages about 15 years ago, but I downed more than a few cokes while there – and found it to be quite refreshing. Still, it seemed like I couldn’t get enough to drink.

During our stay, I thought often of Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan women at Jacob’s well. You can read about it in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of John.

<sup>5</sup> (Jesus) came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as He was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. <sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, **“Will you give me a drink?”** <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to Him, **“You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?”** (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) <sup>10</sup> 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.”** <sup>11</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, **“you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?”** <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?” <sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, **“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”** <sup>15</sup> The woman said to Him, **“Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”** <sup>16</sup> He told her, **“Go, call your husband and come back.”** <sup>17</sup> “I have no husband,” she replied.

<sup>18</sup> Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." <sup>19</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet." <sup>20</sup> Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." <sup>21</sup> Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." <sup>25</sup> The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called the Christ) "is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us." <sup>26</sup> Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he." <sup>27</sup> Just then His disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" <sup>28</sup> Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup> "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

The woman in the narrative knew what it was to be thirsty. For her, "running water" meant "running back and forth" to the well to fetch water and carry it home. But, Jesus knew that she was also a person who had been "running" from one relationship to another, desperately trying to find fulfillment in her life. She had been married 5 times and was now living with a man she had not married. Each time, she found her well running dry – and she was even more thirsty than before. You see, she knew what it was like to long for acceptance and love. She knew how it felt like to have your heart emptied of all but grief and loneliness. And knowing all that, Jesus told her:

**"Everyone who drinks water from this well will get thirsty again and again. (But) Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever."** Wow, I could've used some of that in Haiti. At first this sounds like one gulp would be so satisfying that you'd never have need for another. But look what Jesus also says, **"The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."** So, it is not a matter of Jesus giving us a single drink, so much as Him providing us with "running water" - not in our house, but in our heart. A continual source of refreshment that travels with us all the time. That is pretty cool. But what is this water? What's it like? Is it colorless and stale? Or like Gatorade or Propel? Consider Jesus' words in **John 7:37-39**.

<sup>37</sup> "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." <sup>39</sup> By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive."

What Jesus offers those of us who believe is His Spirit – and He compares this gift to a spring of fresh water that never runs dry. Yet, this water is not to satisfy physical thirst. This water refreshes our soul. It hydrates our spirits. It cools tempers and washes away our anxieties and fears. And this water flows free all the time. That sounds like something worth having, doesn't it? How do I get in on this "*living water*" that He offers?

Jesus said ***we must believe in Him***. That sounds simple enough, but if it's that easy why are so many people "*running on empty*?" Because believing in Jesus is not something they're prepared to do. For some reason, they would rather believe in drugs or alcohol or improper relationships for their fulfillment. Why? It pleases the flesh for the moment. It gives them a rush – but one that doesn't last. Eventually those wells stagnate – even become poisonous.

More perplexing is why many believers feel "*dried up*" and "*sapped of energy and vitality*." I cannot help but believe it is because of how infrequently they drink from the well. The verb tense that Jesus uses indicates that we "*keep coming*" and we "*keep drinking*." Our hosts in Haiti supplied the cooler of water, but we had to receive it to take advantage of it. They did not hold us down and pour the water down our throats.

Similarly, God supplies and Jesus invites, but ***we have to come to the well and drink***. Not just once, but continually. How? If you have not yet recognized Jesus as the Messiah sent to save you and accepted Him as both Savior and Lord, I urge you to do so today. If you have not yet be united with Him in the waters of baptism as He instructed and demonstrated to be His Father's expressed desire. Then continue in prayer...rest often in His word...drink daily of His Spirit. Keep hydrated!

I invite you now to ***COME TO THE WELL***.