

## Crazy Love

Scripture: John 4:1 - 14

We live in a crazy world! Come on, that should not be surprise to anyone? Just look at Reality TV shows – they have plenty of drama and silly stuff. It's crazy! Just look at 'The Bachelor' or 'Real Housewives of NJ, Las Vegas, or Atlanta'. You will see outrageous things at its best.

We have experienced crazy things in our nation with great division and outlandish statements being made. We live amidst the reality of an economy which is very unstable. And we live in a world of religious volatility.

Yet, there is something deep inside all of us that desires another kind of crazy. It is a 'Crazy Love'! Our souls are thirsty for a love that is everlasting, and yet, reality shows, political parties, and public institutions alone cannot quench our thirst for a 'Crazy Love'. We need and want something more!

When I was young, I spent most of my summer playing baseball or basketball. Whether on a field or a playground or in the backyard I always know that within an hour of playing in the summer heat someone will say – I am so thirsty! And so the debate would begin as we discussed what we should drink. My preference was an orange soda or Yohoo. Do you remember Yohoo? A chocolate drink but not chocolate milk!

But often we would pick what a mother would always choose – WATER!

Yes I know that Gatorade has extra nutrients in it and it comes in kid friendly flavors like glacier freeze, rainberry, and lemon lime but water always seemed to hit the right place. Oh, I loved a sugar rush from Mt. Dew but water would due and it was free back then from a water fountain.

What was your drink of choice in your youth on a hot summer day? What is your drink of choice on any day? Do you choose coffee, tea, soda, or a sports drink? I have to admit I am not a coffee drinker and Diet sodas have a place in my refrigerator. But still today, a cold glass of water hit the spot!

Science tells us that water is not only thirst quenching but water has many benefits for our bodies and vital organs. Water prevents dehydration, regulates body temperature, carries nutrients and oxygen to the cells, provides moisture to the skin and other tissues, helps prevent constipation, helps our joints, helps strengthen our muscles, and helps curb our appetite. Water does the body good!

Water contains no calories or cholesterol, and water is low in sodium. An average healthy adult needs to consume at least 8 glasses of water each day; and even more in the summer heat! I bet each of you could drink more water to quench your physical thirst.

(If Abbreviated service – pass out water bottles)

In our scripture reading today Jesus is on his way back to the Galilean area from Judea and he decides to take the shortest route to Galilee which takes him through Samaria. Most good Jews would take the longer route to Galilee which would take them around Samaria. You see Samaria is where the lower class Jews live. These are the Jews who have mixed bred with other cultures during the great exile. A good Jew would avoid Samaria! But Jesus travels through Samaria on his way to Galilee. Jesus becomes tired and thirsty so he stops in the town of Sychar, at Jacob's well, a very famous well that my bus stopped at on my tour of the Holy Land. It is there that Jesus encounters a woman.

The woman was at the well in the heat of the day. Most women would go to the well in the early morning or in the evening when it is cooler. But our woman comes to the well in the heat of the day because she wants to avoid the other women in the town. You see, she has a checkered background and the people in the town want nothing to do with her. She is the lower class of the lower class.

Jesus asked the woman for a drink and she immediately reminds Jesus that he is a Jewish man and she is a Samaritan woman. A good Jewish man should have nothing to do with a Samaritan woman. Jesus then starts talking to her in a strange way. Jesus has a conversation with the woman. This is one of the longest conversations Jesus has with anyone in the Bible.

Jesus tells her – *If you only knew who was talking to you, you would ask me for a drink of living water!*

The woman responds – Sir, you have nothing to draw the water with! And where can I get this living water?

Jesus answers her – *Everyone who drinks of the living water will never be thirsty again! The living water I give will well up like a spring of water to eternal life.*

Likewise, there is a spiritual thirst inside each of us. In our humanness we try to quench this spiritual thirst by TV, sports, politics, relationships, and even money!

So how do we quench our spiritual thirst?

A quote from a book written by Francis Chan entitled ‘Crazy Love’ – *If you could have heaven, with no sickness, with all the friends you have ever had on earth, with all the food you ever liked, with all the leisure activities you like, with all the natural beauty you have ever seen, with all the physical pleasures you have ever tasted, and no human conflict or nature disaster – could you be satisfied with heaven if Christ was not there?*

Would you take pleasure in a life without Jesus?

This seems like an easy question to ask in a church, but if we were honest, it is a tough question to answer in our humanness.

Just like we know that water is the best beverage for us, we often drink of a beverage filled with the pleasures of this world. Why, here is why – Most of us have tasted the world and everything it has to offer but we have failed to nourish ourselves with the fullness of the love of Jesus so we settle for substitutes.

\*We pray and ask God to pay our bills because we have not tasted the fullness of an abundant God who can lead us toward generosity.

\*We pray and ask God to fix our bad relationships because we have not tasted the fullness of God's love that is immeasurably more satisfying than what we as humans can give to one another.

\*We pray and ask God to take our physical ailments away because we have learned we settle for a body fixing when what God really desires is a heart fixing that will last forever even as our bodies age.

We have tasted the world and everything it has to offer, and often Jesus seems so far away. We are distracted and we substitute things like worldly soda. We settle for the energy drinks of this world while Christ offers us living water. We take worldly Gatorade and coffee instead of Jesus' living water.

I envision Jesus flipping a water bottle to each of us – are we going to catch it? Jesus is flipping a bottle of living water to us and saying – *Drink from my well of living water first and then share my love with others.*

Now that is CRAZY LOVE!

Let us pray:

God, help us to open ourselves up to you.

O God, we need to come to your table and drink from the fountain of everlasting love. We need your living water to nourish us and sustain us.

Let all worldly distractions never hinder us from your living water. But if those worldly distractions stop us from living water, forgive us.

It is in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that we pray this prayer – AMEN.