

Living Water: Covered In Jesus Grace

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INI - SDG

One day when we lived in India, we turned on our kitchen faucet and it wasn't just water that came out but also a little wiggling worm.

We live with so many wonders that we often take them for granted. One of those wonders is not just wormless water but running water in your house. Imagine if you had to walk to the well outside of town twice a day like the woman of Samaria.

Running water is an incredible thing to have which we often take for granted.

Jesus reminds us in our text, which the VBS kids hear about **on Wednesday**, that even better than running water is the living water which he gives us through his word. Yet just as we take running water for granted so we also take the living water of God's word for granted. There was a time when people did not know Jesus. There was a time when people were told about Jesus but did not understand his love. They saw him only as tyrant who demanded do this or do that. There was time when they knew the truth of his word but were threatened with death if they worshipped him.

We have what this woman was so excited to receive the living water of God's grace poured into our lives through his word and sacraments, yet we so often take it for granted.

This is what our children learned about this week. The gift of water, even the living water through which God blesses our life so that we are covered in Jesus' grace.

Monday - Water from a rock

On Monday the kids not only heard about how God gave water from a rock as a covenant of His, but they also received the proof that he was always with them.

Kids and long car rides aren't usually a good combination. They have a tendency to fight with one another and complain. It can be frustrating. You're trying to take your kids on a vacation to Disney world or fishing in northern Wisconsin and instead of being happy that they get to go to these places, it seems all they want to do is complain and fight with each other. There is no need for it, their parents are right there and will not forget to feed them and give them water when they need it.

God took the Israelites on a journey as well out of slavery into a good and pleasant land. But just like children in a car all they could do is complain and fight. Yet God was with them. He told Moses to strike the rock with his staff. Notice that Moses was to use not just his staff but the same staff with which he struck the waters of the Red Sea. Then he struck the water and God gave dry ground, now with the same staff he strikes the dry rock and God gives water. This water therefore was a testimony between God and his people that he was with them.

In the same way God is leading us on a long journey, and we too are apt to complain. Yet God has given us the living waters of our baptism as a covenant of His grace and an assurance that he is with us always.

On Tuesday – Naaman is Healed

God used the waters of the Jordan to heal Naaman of his leprosy. Yet despite God's promise Naaman at first would not enter the Jordan. All he could see was dirty water and he thought, "what good will that do, what difference will it make."

So it is that many people look on the living water which God offers with the same attitude. What good will that do?

Just recently I suggested that someone go and speak to their pastor.

They responded, "what good will it do to talk the pastor, he'll just tell us Jesus loves us."

What good will it do to start our days with prayer? What good will it do to sit around the table every evening and have bible study together as a family? What good will it do to get up early and go to church? We despise the promises of God because to our eyes they appear weak.

Yet it is according to the wisdom of God that his power is hidden in small things, simple water, a simple book, even a sinful human pastor.

Naaman when he tested God's promise learned the truth of God's power hidden in simple things. God's promises are not always fulfilled so obviously and powerfully, but when they are it is a reminder to us to trust his promises on matter the outward appearance. Through simple things like water and his word God has covered us in Jesus' grace.

Friday – Lydia Hears God's Word

We are often too quick to take God's promises for granted, to complain like the Israelites or to despise the package in which God's promises come like Naaman, but on Friday we heard about Lydia.

Many of the kids asked, "who is Lydia?"

Lydia is not a story we hear often, perhaps because it is not dramatic like a man healed of leprosy or fire falling from heaven. But Lydia is a reminder of what it means to live in God's living water.

Lydia was a seller of purple dyes who lived in Philippi. Lydia did not take God's living water for granted but loved to sit by the river every Saturday and receive with a joyful heart the word of God. To her the apostle Paul came and preached Jesus risen from the dead, and she treasured this living water. She was no doubt a very wealthy woman, but she received the news of Jesus as the greatest of all treasures.

She was baptized and covered in Jesus grace just as we also have been.

Thursday – Jesus Washes Feet

Lydia treasured most what our children learned on Thursday, that Jesus came to serve rather than to be served. He laid aside his coat, just as he laid aside his glory and power as God. He knelt down to serve his disciples just as he came down to serve us and give his life as a ransom for us. He took up the basin and washed their feet so that they would be clean just as he washes us in the waters of baptism.

Jesus does not begin a thing and change his mind. We heard in our second reading, "Having loved his own he loved them to the end."

Having begun to love us he never stopped loving us.

Having begun the task of being savior, he went all the way to the cross and death.

Having cleansed us through his death he continues to wash away our sin.

We are covered in his grace because he served us and was and is faithful in all things to the end.

This is the living water which Jesus promised to the Samaritan woman and which we have received. It is a thing we often take for granted but it is a thing which we ought to treasure dearly as Lydia did. Amen