

Friday - March 29

So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 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.) 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."

John 4:5-10

(Read the whole story at John 4:1-30)

It happens over and over for me – this experience of God's relentless grace. I'm most often aware of it only after the moment, as I think back on it and understand again that God has "graced" me.

Scripture is the account of how God has graced God's people – as a group and as individuals. The gospels give us glimpses of how this happens when we read of Jesus' encounters with people. Such an example is the story recorded in John about Jesus meeting a woman at Jacob's well in Samaria. So many things about that moment would indicate that it never should have happened. Yet, through it persons were exposed to God's relentless grace and lives were changed.

My dad suggested to me, on more than one occasion, that it's possible to live "above as well as under the circumstances." I think that happened at Jacob's well. Jesus saw the woman above the circumstances. He saw one needing to be loved and affirmed by God, and to be freed to share the experience of being "graced." It changed her life, and she hurried to tell others in her village about this One she had encountered who had "graced" her.

I think that may be what happens when we get "graced." God sees us, knows us, loves us, above the circumstances. The sins, the details, the efforts to hide or to justify ourselves—none of that gets in God's way of loving us. Our lives are changed—again—and we are freed to share that experience with others.

I wonder what would happen in this world if we tried to see others "above as well as under the circumstances."

John

Prayer: Holy One, thank you for "gracing" me. Open me to experience more of your grace. Strengthen me to respond to your reality in my life by sharing that grace with others. In Jesus' name. Amen.