

***The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) John 4:9 ESV***

In Jesus' day, Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. In fact, there was 550 years of ethnic hatred between them, which resulted in well established dividing walls of prejudice and bitterness.

We live in some of the most divided times in history. Yet Jesus has called us to proclaim and bring His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. In the story in John chapter 4, Jesus demolished racial, religious and gender barriers. He demonstrated His kingdom by not only engaging with a "hated" and "unclean" Samaritan woman, but by revealing Himself to her as the long awaited Messiah, who offered her eternal life. He crossed barriers to reach a hated and rejected woman and people (because the whole town ended up believing in Him).

In God's kingdom there are no differences, no divisions (Ephesians 2:15; Galatians 3:26-29). We are all one in Christ, all sons and daughters of God. We are called to bring His kingdom to earth, to demonstrate His love for all people, to share the good news about Jesus; that He loves us and has paid the price for our sins. To enter His kingdom, we must receive Him as our Saviour and Lord and forsake our former lifestyle and beliefs to follow Him.

No one is beyond the need for grace or the reach of grace.

Is our church community a reflection of God's kingdom?

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God? How does it apply to you?
- 2) Is there someone in your community, at work, school or a neighbour perhaps that you have avoided due to some type of prejudice, whether it be racial, religious, gender or otherwise?
- 3) Consider how you can engage and reach those who are rejected and marginalised with the good news about Jesus.

Based on today's reading, what is one thing God is saying to you?