

Sermon for One Nation Under God: Expect

Date: August 7, 2022

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

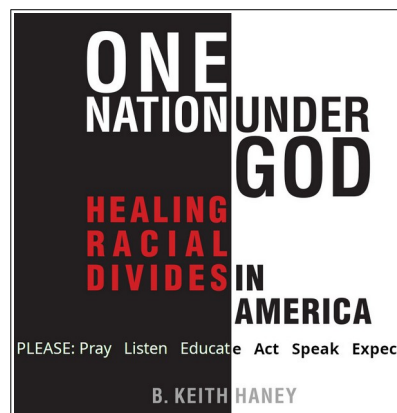
Old Testament: 2 Kings 5:1-15

Epistle Reading: Romans 5:1-8

Gospel Reading: John 4:5-26

Sermon Text: John 4:5-26

Sermon Title: One Nation Under God: Expect



Introit: Psalm 147:8-11; Antiphon: Psalm 147:7

Hymns:

- LSB 784 - Take My Life and Let It Be
- LSB 483 - With High Delight Let Us Unite
- LSB 660 - Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus
- LSB 688 - "Come, Follow Me," the Savior Spake
- LSB 979 - God, Whose Almighty Word

Liturgy:

Divine Service I, p. 151

Songs:

- Word of God Speak
- Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus
- Truth be Told
- When God Ran
- After All – Crowder
- Agnus Dei (Koine)

Liturgy:

Creative Worship



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Text: John 4:5–26

[Jesus] came to a town of Samaria called Sychar {*SICK-ar*}, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) 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.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”

Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our risen Lord and Savior Jesus the Holy Christ of God. Amen.

We have two accounts from the Bible. One Old Testament account and one New Testament account. Both dealing with the same problems. Both of them fixed by the same solution. All of that pointing to the solution to our problem right here.

Today we close the sermon series with “Expect.” Expectations can be good or bad. We can expect a bad thing to happen. We can expect a good thing to happen. Our expectations can effect our outcome and often do. It can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Expectations are often the cause of trouble between people groups. One side expects the other to act a certain way. The other side’s prejudice (pre-judging) causes assumptions too, and the two sides find it impossible to start a simple conversation.

It is when Gods steps in that things change. Only Jesus can fix the problem. When you reject God’s Word. When you reject the Church as the answer. When you reject those speaking God’s Word the prejudice (pre-judging) wins and the problem persists. Let’s see how that happens in the Bible.



Naaman was a great general. A mighty warrior. He had collected slaves through his conquests. He had the respect of his king. His life was about as good as it could be. He had a successful career and life’s future looked good. Then he got Leprosy. That disease was feared in those days because of the slow, grotesque, stench of death that crawled over your body until it got you. It was thought to be incurable. Your body rotted away while you yet breathed.



Then a slave girl speaks. You’d expect a slave to think, “Serves you right.” Expectations can be wrong. A slave girl tells his wife, ‘there is a cure but it’s in enemy lands.’ You’d expect Naaman to think it foolish to listen to a slave girl and expect it to be foolish to go. Expectations can be wrong.



A series of events brings Naaman to the house of prophet Elisha. Namaan expects a great production. He is accustom to respect and pomp as his presence is made known. He arrives at Elisha’s house and his arrival is announced. Naaman expects this



defeated enemy to bow. If not that at least raise his hands and call on the mighty Lord God of Hosts and bring a powerful and miraculous cure. Elisha doesn't even come out of the house. He send a message with the message, "Take a bath." Naaman is enraged.



I knew a person who had a skin disease. It was a psoriasis that causes thick scales to cover most of his body. It often had a putrid smell. He had sought many treatments, but there was little anyone could do. From time to time a person, trying to be helpful would say, "maybe you should wash more often." They would say it like perhaps it had not occurred to him that a bath might help. It really angered him that people would think, "I'm so stupid I don't know how to take a shower."

He understood Naaman's feelings. I would bet Elisha was not the first person to suggest Naaman should take a bath. If it were that simple he already would have. Naaman had traveled a great distance at great cost with great expectations only to hear, "Take a bath." You might understand why he got so angry.

His companions on the journey said, "Naaman if Elisha had told to to conquer some great feat you would have done anything. So when he gives you this simple thing why not try it. We've already come this far."



Eventually Namaan is willing to give it a try. He no doubt had expectations he'd be publicly embarrassed.

Looking foolish in front of everyone has he crawls down into the Jordan River and dunks himself seven times, according to Elisha's instructions. Expectations can be wrong. They often are when God steps in. Namaan comes out of the water and his skin is not just healed. It is as fresh and new as a young child. God and the water changed everything. That's the Old Testament account.



How about the New Testament. Jesus sits down at a well at high noon. The day is hot. As He sits alone a Samaritan woman arrives. That already says so much and

sets so many expectations. A Samaritan. "You know what they're like." A Samaritan woman. "We all know what they're like." She's arriving at noon, in the heat of the day. She's avoiding people for a reason. Even her own people know what she's like.



She, no doubt, had expectations too. As she approaches the well she sees a Jew sitting there. “Oh great. Here it comes.” Then she realizes He’s a Jewish rabbi. “You know what they’re like.” She needed the water, so she probably tried to stay on the far side of the well, be about her business as quickly as possible, and be off before anything happened.

Then the Jew speaks. She’s got expectations. She’s going to be called names. ...and for her some of them will probably be true. After all, she really is one of “those kind.” As Jesus speaks it would not surprise me if she asked Him to repeat Himself. “What did you say?”



“Please give Me a drink of water.”

“Do you know who I am?! You a Jew you know!”

“Ya, I know. Can I have a drink.”

“You know Jews don’t like Samaritans.”

“Ya, I know. Can I have a drink.”

“You’d be unclean.”

“Ya, I know. Can I have a drink.”

“How can you ask me for a drink? Perhaps you missed my point. I’m a Samaritan woman. Your a Jew.”



“Ya. If you knew who was asking you’d have ask Me for a drink.”

At this point she’s got to be thinking, ‘Think guy is a little touched.’ “How could you give me a drink? You don’t have anything to get the water. The well is deep you know.”



Jesus says, “Ya. People who drink from this well die. The water I have is eternal and gives eternal life. Those who drink it will never be thirsty.”

“Really?!” You perhaps can hear the sarcasm in her voice. She’s been around the block more than once. “Well give me some of your water so I don’t have to come here any more.”

“Go get your husband.” It looks like Jesus is changing the subject. He’s not. He’s just helping her understand He understands she’s been around the block more than once.

“I’m not married.”

“Ya, I know. You’ve had five husbands and now your shackled up with some guy.”

She went into this conversations with all sorts of expectations. Expectations can be wrong. I’d guess that’s were she paused, thinking, ‘How do You know that?’

That’s when everything begins to change. This, by any civilized standards ‘degenerate woman,’ becomes one of Jesus’ first missionaries. In short order the whole town believes in Jesus. God and the water changed everything.

You have expectations too. It might be a bit hard to believe, and if it wasn’t written in the Bible, you might not believe, Jesus used one of “those kind” of women as a missionary for His message of salvation. Your expectations would no doubt have caused very similar thoughts about all of the apostles. They were all pretty rough folks. Not good church-going folks like us.

Here’s the problem Jesus has, with good church-going folks like us. We, too often, have the truth but don’t tell anyone. Jesus has expectations. They include:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.¹

We good church-going folks too often fail to meet Jesus’ expectations. You see we’re “those kind of people.” Some of us may look at the varied people groups in and around Austin and think, “They’re not like us.” You have expectations about what constitutes a faithful Christians. Expectations can be wrong.

We have to be very careful with our expectations. We will always have them, but need to remember the differences between us often leave room for you and I to grow. We must be willing to have our expectations proved wrong. Bad expectations may be wrong as you discover “that person” is a good person. Good expectations may be wrong as you discover “that person” isn’t so good. Expectations can be wrong. We have to be careful with our expectations.

We looked at two encounters filled with expectations. I want to look at one more. This encounter should hit closer to home. This person comes into babbling nonsensically. So feeble they can’t walk and have to be carried in. They can’t even

1 Matthew 28:20

speak for themselves. We have what they need, but when we give it they sometimes get grumpy with us, for being so generous. We have expectations when we're being so generous. You'd think they'd at least act grateful. Expectations can be wrong.



The nonsensical babbling person is a baby. A baby who, like you, was born into the house of Satan. We have what they need: Holy Baptism. When we generously give it to them sometimes they get grumpy and cry. We expect they'd act better. Expectations can be wrong. God and the water changes everything.

“Those people” are your people. You are one of them. You might look different. You might speak different. You might dress different. You might eat different. If they're willing to come in here and give God a chance to prove their expectations wrong, should we not be willing to do the same?



What are your expectations of God? What are God's expectations of you? When it comes to the divisions in America, or just here in Austin, it is God and the water that changes everything. The whole country is looking for an answer without Jesus. They will never find it. We have the answer. Will we meet God's expectations and share it? Even with “those people?” I pray you do.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

Proclaim God's Word,
Encourage one another in faith,
Witness to God's love and
Serve all people

