

Building the Bridge Between the Samaritan Woman and the Blind Man

John 4 to John 9

We started our journey with Jesus near the Jordan River where John was baptizing. We attended a wedding in Cana where Jesus turned water into wine. From there we went to for the first time to Jerusalem in John's Gospel (he goes a total of three times as opposed to only once in Matthew, Mark, and Luke). There he enters the Temple making a big scene, angrily, perhaps, to make a point about the presence of God being within him (and everyone) rather than just in a physical place like the Temple.

We move from this action during daylight to secret meeting, under the cover of darkness, between the Pharisee named Nicodemus and Jesus. In a stranger, but important exchange, Nicodemus tries to figure out what Jesus means by the words "born from above or anew"? When he leaves, we never quite know if Nicodemus grasped the meaning of Jesus words? Do we fully understand their impact for our lives today?

Moving from darkness to light, a theme in John's Gospel, we found ourselves last week under the noon day sun, at Jacob's Well, where Jesus had stopped to rest and seeks a drink of water (another important image in John's Gospel) from of all people a Samaritan (hated by Jews) and a woman who had a run of bad luck in life and love. Yet, interestingly, she hears and understands what Jesus is saying, and then goes back to her village to tell the others to "Come and See" Jesus. We are left to wonder if we would listen to someone we might hate (despise) and who had a reputation like hers?

"Come and See", with "Seeing" being a key word, is another theme in John's Gnostic Gospel.

This morning we skip from Chapter 4 to Chapter 9. Along the way, there are many other encounters with Jesus along the Way. If he had a Fitbit, I wonder how many steps he would get in a day? He leaves Samaria, heads back to Galilee, stops again in Cana, then heads back to Jerusalem. Which is where we join him this morning. As we are walking along, we see a blind man along the side of the road. Do you see him? You might say this encounter is like going to the eye doctor to learn how well we can truly "see" God in Jesus and in one another?