
AUGUST 3RD, 2020, BRAAM FAMILY

Gatherings

John 4:1-26



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A bit of background to the story in John 4; at this time in history there was a division between the Jews and the Samaritans. The division was mainly because of their religious practices and beliefs, and this is seen when the woman asks, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” because the woman understood that the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritan and vice versa, but on that day, Jesus broke that boundary - just like He did to save the world (John 3:16).

The woman judged Jesus based on Him being a Jew, and also because He didn't have a bucket to draw water with. How often do we judge people based on what they look like or on what they have or don't have, not realising that our solution could be found in the least thought of people?

We can learn from this woman that we should stop approaching Jesus with the pretense that we have everything under control. The pretense that we put up can keep us away from what God wants to give us. This woman's knowledge about Jacob's well also kept her from receiving the truth that Jesus had. To what we know, God can add a life-changing truth if we allow Him to, it is a truth that liberates and leads us into genuine worship.

The well in this story represents a place of gathering or encounter, it is a place where people would go to get water in order to satisfy a need. We all do have a place where we gather, a place where we meet with the desire to satisfy a need. We gather at university because we want to get knowledge, at church because we desire spiritual growth and at a hospital because we want to receive healing.

That, however, becomes an issue when we get caught up in the means of gathering and ignore its purpose. It would be a tragedy to meet without a goal, and it would be a bigger tragedy to gather with bad company. So it is important to know the purpose of any gathering and also know who you are gathering with; that's why the Bible says bad company corrupts good morals (see 1 Corinthians 15:33).

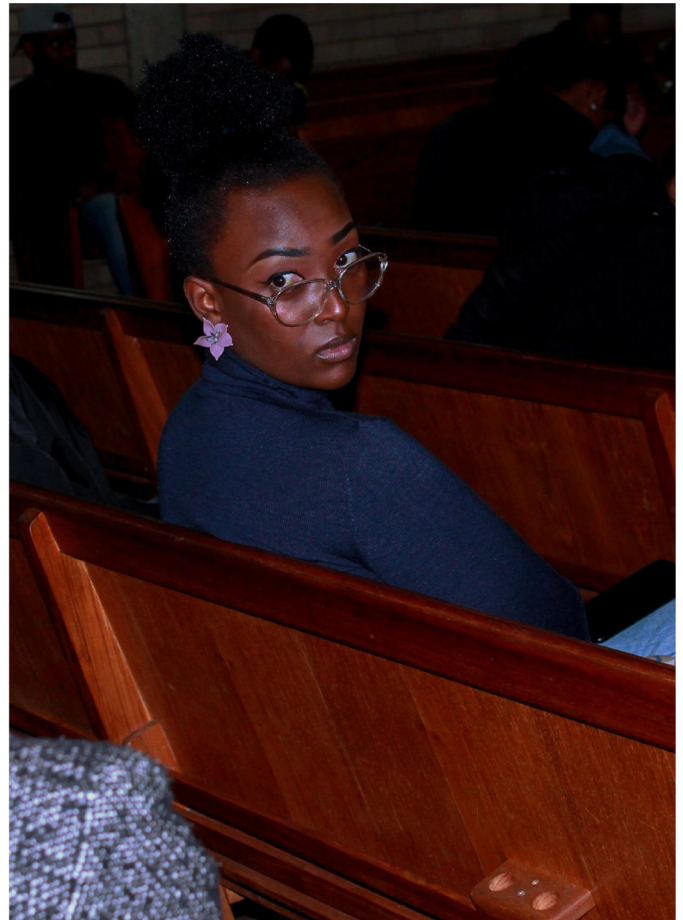
Be selective with the gathering you find yourself in because it can deviate you from your destiny, or it can do you a lot of good. You need to choose the people you gather with because they can influence you. There are certain habits that you won't be able to stop just because you are in the wrong gathering.

God values gatherings, and through them, He can do so many things. We should be careful to not undermine the impact of gathering. So for the times that you find yourself in a secular gathering, don't let anything stop you from sharing the gospel. Never let pride get in the way of you sharing about Jesus.

An ungodly gathering may seem to quench your thirst but it's only temporary, and the need remains. But for the gathering of the saints, God goes beyond meeting your immediate needs and makes you a source for others to have their needs met. He quenches your thirst and makes of you a fountain, which enables you to take care of others (see John 4:14). You become a tool equipped for eternal values and purpose.

There is power in the gathering of saints, that's why when we come together, we should have high expectations because He will give us beyond our expectations (see Ephesians 3:20). Believe that you will get everything you ask for and more. He blesses you to become a blessing.

What we see happening around the world is that people are being led to become scared and fearful of gatherings. Even to a point where there is a division among believers and that some end up believing that the gathering of saints is a problem. As for us, we know that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. We have to carry that fire out there as it is meant to be felt regardless of how many we are in numbers. Most of the restrictions are in favour of businesses but not the church.



We are not blaming the government but rebuking the spirit behind them.

The world is trying to change our view on gatherings by enforcing social distancing, masks, sanitizers and the lockdown. We cannot allow ourselves to be changed by the world's view, but we should let the fire in our hearts burn even more. We need to break this fear and realise that real safety is in God's presence. There is safety in the gathering of the saints, there you will be equipped to go and heal and strengthen the sick.

Psalms 91:1 says, "He who dwells in the shadow of the Most High, he will rest in the shadow of the Almighty God." The shadow of the Most High is where His presence is and not outside of it. Your safety is in the Presence of God, and also in the gathering of the saints.
