

## September 27,2020 Jarrod Albergaria Knee-Jerk Reactions

At FFC, we feel called to see transformation take place via intimacy with God and intimacy with others. Closeness! But great divides are developing amongst us. How do we proceed in the midst of a plandemic, a pandemic, mask, no mask, black lives matter, all lives matter, church in person, church online, etc.? So many reactions.

How do we, as a church, respond in ways that would bring people in and not push people further away? Can we see that our knee-jerk reactions may create further division between us and those that need the Gospel?

### John 4:1-29 The Woman at the Well

Jesus encountered the woman at the well as a great divide existed between Jews and Samaritans. There was political tension between Samaritans and the Jews so much that Jews traveled further away to avoid traveling through Samaria. Yet, Jesus traveled through Samaria.

The parallels that we find in this story to what we face today give us a good comparison on how to respond in a time when others see things in a different way than we see.

We are seeing divides between the world and the church as they saw them years ago - politically, culturally, socially, religiously. We are also seeing a trend in knee-jerk reactions. Like the automatic reflex reaction to our knee being tested, these reactions can be thoughtless.

One of these reactions is cancellation. "Cancel culture" is the idea that when someone's beliefs or thoughts don't line up with your own, we cancel, excommunicate, silence, or ignore the person. The easiest one is to give up on a person, because then we don't seek to understand them, who they are, or where their thoughts are coming from.

Jesus could have responded to the Samaritans this way. But He put Himself squarely in the path of this woman for an interaction that would not only change her life but would send ripples through Samaria as she would go and share the testimony of her exchange with the Messiah. The woman, overwhelmed by her encounter with the love of Christ, runs to tell others.

Another knee-jerk reaction is that we often defame others without seeing the hurt. Jesus saw an opportunity in the woman, not a problem. He responds to her with compassion.

He responds to the disciples in **John 4:35** *Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.*

**I Corinthians 9:22** *To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may, by all means, save some. I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it. (NASB)*

**I Corinthians 9:19-23** *Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it! (The Message)*

Jesus had compassion for the woman and spoke to her needs. What would it look like if we speak grace, hope, love, and salvation to people who look different from us? We want to see people experience Jesus and abundant life. If we want to see the world around us change, we need to see people's hearts captured by an encounter with Christ. Our participation in this process is to love people and share the Gospel. The Gospel has the power to change.

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Have you lost hope in people changing?

How have you experienced the cancellation culture? or defamation?

What view can you silence in order to see and hear others' hearts?

How can we purpose to see hearts rather than having knee-jerk reactions?