

## **LOVING LIFE, PART 19 • Missing the Menu**

Pastor Matt Heard, Read: John 4:43-54

October 27/28, 2007

**Three Groups of People who are struggling to pick up the “glass” of submission to Christ’s truth and His will:**

- 1. The Religious** (v. 43-45)
- 2. The Hurting** (v. 46-50)
- 3. The Skeptical** (v. 51-54)

*Loving*  
**Life**  
*A* journey  
through  
the Gospel of John

### **Questions:**

1. Pastor Matt told the story of The Queen Mary – a naval ship that had been de-commissioned. During a refurbishing project workers found the Queen Mary’s smoke stacks were literally disintegrating. The only thing holding the stacks together were the 30 coats of paint that had been applied over many years. The Queen Mary looked fine on the outside, but underneath it was literally falling apart. As followers of Christ, many of us have had a similar experience. We have been so focused on our outer appearance, that we have ignored the reality that we have been falling apart on the inside. Consider a time on your faith journey when this was true of you. Share your story, and explain how God worked in your heart to move you away from this “religious” thinking.

Matthew 15:8-9 *“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”*

2. According to John 4, the Samaritans “got it” in terms of submitting to Jesus, the Giver of Living Water. In contrast, the Galileans failed to “get it” and instead found Jesus merely intriguing for His religious views. To use Matt’s imagery, the Samaritans drank the Living Water. The Galileans drank crackers. When you approach Jesus through prayer and meditation, do you view Him as your source of Life-Giving Water, or do you see Him as a wise and intriguing religious leader? Explain.
3. Regular church attendance, good works, Bible knowledge, appropriate behavior, and other seemingly “good” things can all become idols (crackers) in our spiritual lives. They can inhibit us from drinking from Jesus, the source of Living Water. Is this form of idolatry something that you have struggled with in the past? Is it something that you struggle with today? Describe your experience.

4. Because we live in a fallen world we will incur pain – believer and unbeliever alike. Because of this reality, it's critical for us to understand that Jesus cares deeply about who we are and what we go through. He cares about the good in our lives. He cares about the challenges. And He even cares about the painful things. He created us. He loves us. He desires to be intimately involved in our day-to-day journey. In John 11:35, we read that *"Jesus wept"*, revealing Jesus' compassion and concern for the hurting. Yet Pastor Matt challenged us to consider that even our hurt and pain can become an idol. How? By allowing hurts to get in the way of drinking deeply from Christ's Living Water. While Jesus cares deeply about your pain, He cares more about your heart! What does this make you think/feel/believe about Jesus – that He is ultimately more concerned about your heart than your hurt?

5. Think back to a painful situation you have experienced in your life. Did this experience drive you away from Jesus, or did it draw you closer to Him? Explain.

6. If we are honest, we all have skeptical moments on our faith journey. We all have times when we just don't have the answers to life's tough questions. Ultimately, the questions – and the answers we get from these questions (or the lack thereof) – can hold us back from a deep relationship with Christ. What questions along your journey have held you back from drinking deeply of the Living Water? Discuss.

John 12:35-37 *"Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them. Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him."*

7. What tangible way can you exhibit a step of faith – in the face of your questions and doubts?