

To the living Saints at Manatee Life Church,

**SCRIPTURE:**

John 4:16-17 (NIV) – Larger reading: John 4:1-26

*Jesus told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” “I have no husband,” she replied.*

**STORY:**

The first governor-general of Australia was a man by the name of Lord Hopetoun. One of his most cherished possessions was a 300 year old ledger he had inherited from John Hope, one of his ancestors. Hope had owned a business in Edinburgh, where he first used this old ledger. When Lord Hopetoun received it, he noticed that it had inscribed on its front page this prayer, "O Lord, keep me and this book honest!"

**OBSERVATION:**

A woman at the well. A chance encounter with Jesus. A conversation. A life revealed. Hope lingers in the balance. She responds. Honesty wins. Possibility of a new life is offered.

Simple words across an old ledger. A testimony of an ancestor. A reminder that honesty is important.

Political ads run. Attack ads win the day. Polls react. Money pours in. PACs do their dirty work. We are caught in the middle. Where is honesty?

E-mails fly. A “must read” in the subject line. Again attacks win the day. Negativity works its evil. They are forwarded. What part of Exodus 20:16 don’t we understand?

Where are all the honest people? No wonder our country is in a mess. Hope is lost when honesty is pushed aside.

I remember the stinging words of my mother when she caught me in a lie: “Jimmy, when you tell a lie you lose your integrity. When you lose your integrity you’ve lost everything. One lie leads to another lie which leads to an empty life of dishonesty and then no one can trust you ever again.”

**QUOTE**

*You’ve wanted to take off your mask. You’ve wanted to stop pretending. You’ve wondered what God would do if you opened your cobweb-covered door of secret sin. This woman wondered what Jesus would do. She must have wondered if the kindness would cease when the truth was revealed. He will be angry.... He will think I’m worthless.... No. It wasn’t perfection that Jesus was seeking, it was honesty. Max Lucado*

**PRAYER:**

Help us, Lord. We are in a mess. And it is getting worse. Help us to be honest with ourselves and with each other. Help us, Lord, we are in trouble.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim  
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***Sunday's Worship will again be on our Facebook page @ Manatee United Methodist Church. Hope to "see" you there.***

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