

# Good News By Vic Dove

## From Her Dipper!

*“There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” John 4:7*

When Jesus decided to travel through Samaria, the disciples feared for their lives. When He talked to a woman at the well, they were confused. I can only imagine how the woman felt. A man talking to a woman in public, in the middle of the day was a nono...But a Jewish man talking to a Samaritan woman anytime of the day or night...this was unheard of. Then, to top off an already tense situation, Jesus asked her for a drink-from her dipper! The dipper she had no doubt just drunk from earlier. Why did Jesus use such extreme actions with this woman? I am glad you ask.

First, Jesus knew this woman needed to hear the

gospel. She needed to hear of the mercy and grace God would give her, no matter how many bad decisions she had in her past. No matter what she looked like, no matter what race she was. Jesus told her “drink the water I give and you will never thirst again.”

Second, Jesus was breaking down walls. The walls of bitterness and hatred are fueled by selfishness and pride that had been passed down through generations between the Jewish and Samaritan people. Jesus knew the disciples, who were all Jews by the way, and the woman had to get their hearts cleansed of this hatred before they could truly grow spiritually and have peace in their lives. Let me explain.

I was born and reared in the south, and most of my youthful years I lived not only in the south but in south Mississippi. My parents and their parents were all from small towns in south Mississippi. It was instilled in me from an early age, I was to have no interaction what

so ever with African American people, and it made no difference what the circumstances were. I can remember asking my Dad why, have they done something to us? And his answer was, no not really, that’s just the way it is.

Folks, we have so much hatred and bitterness in our society today because somewhere down the line someone was told this or that about another race or culture of people. These walls must come down before healing can begin. Hating someone just because they are of a certain race or a certain culture, for no other reason than, because that’s just the way it is, is just wrong, and not only is it wrong it is sin.

When Jesus took a drink from the Samaritan woman’s dipper, she knew He had no hatred in His heart for her. He was treating her as He treated everyone with love and compassion, even though she was a Samaritan.

Shoulder to Shoulder, Bro. Vic



## HISTORICALLY

current events through a historical lens

# SPEAKING

Dr. James Finck, USAO History Professor

### Deliberating the Constitutionality of Presidential Ballot Restrictions

By James Finck, Ph. D.

An amendment meant to keep ex-Confederates from holding office after the Civil War is once again coming into play as Colorado and Maine have announced that former President Donald Trump will not appear on the ballot of their upcoming presidential primaries.

The 14th Amendment, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution states, “No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any state, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any state legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any state, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.”

Setting aside any feelings about Trump and simply looking at this legally, personally, I do not understand how someone not convicted of insurrection can be disqualified in the name of democracy. However, I will leave that argument to legal scholars and instead try to correct a popular online statement that Democrats have done this before with Abraham Lincoln in 1860. While it is true Lincoln was not on any ballots in the South, it’s not because of Democrats’ interference, but because there was no official ballot in 1860.

During most of the 19th century the government did not print official ballots. In fact, during the first several elections nothing was written down at all. A voter came to the courthouse on voting day, swore on the Bible he was who he claimed he was (the first form of voter ID) then announced his vote to the clerk who recorded it. Eventually voting turned to paper, but mostly written on scrap paper or ballots printed in newspapers, but the voting was still public knowledge. Being a public ballot allowed for political machines like Tammany Hall to form and control votes, especially from new immigrants. Eventually parties began printing their own ballots already filled out

and could pass them to their supporters. With most immigrants a party representative met them on the docks and let them know that a job and lodging was prepared for them and all they had to do was vote for their man. Parties even color coded their ballots to guarantee compliance at the open polls.

It was during this time that Lincoln ran for president in 1860. Since the government did not produce a ballot, there is no way it could have excluded Lincoln in the South. The exclusion actually came from Lincoln’s own party. Because the Republican Party had no foothold in the South, there were no Republicans to create or distribute a ballot.

The only slave states where Lincoln received any popular votes were along the border where the Party had some support: Delaware at 23%, Kentucky at .9%, Maryland at 2.4% and Missouri at 10.3%. As a side note, one major reason the Deep South seceded quickly after Lincoln’s victory was because he could begin to give out government jobs. The fear was Southerners might become Republicans simply for the lucrative positions and by the next election Republicans would have printed ballots.

After the Civil War, political machines continued to pressure voters with public ballots leading to calls for reform. Finally in the 1880s, states began going with the Australian System where the government printed ballots and voters submitted them in secret in an attempt to stop the corruption. It was about this time that voter turnout dropped from around 80% to 40%. With the open ballot, parties did what they could to get voters to the polls knowing they could control them. Once they lost control, parties no longer made sure everyone showed up.

If looking for a better example to fit the current situation, look no further than Eugene Debs in the 1920 Election. Debs had run for president four times as a Socialist Party candidate. This fifth time was different as he was serving a ten-year stint in prison for violating the Sedition Act. In 1918, during World War I, President Woodrow Wilson pushed through the Sedition Act making it illegal to criticize the government or the war. That same year Debs gave a speech criticizing both which landed him in jail. His sentence only grew his support and in 1920 the Socialist Party nominated “Convict 2253” for president. Even while serving time for attacking the nation, Debs was allowed on the ballot. Probably the biggest difference is Debs only polled 3.4% of popular votes, whereas if Trump is allowed to run, he might possibly win.

We are walking in uncharted territory with Trump’s primary ban. While the 14th Amendment does not require a criminal conviction, this could set a dangerous precedent. Even when Debs was convicted, he was allowed to run. Fortunately, the Supreme Court has decided to take up the case. It will be up to the court to decide if a state can restrict a candidate from the ballot if it determines the candidate is in violation of the 14th Amendment without a trial or due process.

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## Is a public official working for the citizens when...?

- official doesn’t update government’s website and keep current
- official commonly uses derogatory ‘pet’ names for anyone who does not hold identical views or anyone perceived as questioning or challenging
- official limits information available on a government’s website
- official offers solution which isn’t a full solution, just to appear ‘helpful’
- official tells staff to ignore Open Records requests instead of responding to them, hoping that the person will not pursue the request
- official doesn’t look for ways to be transparent, particularly with online information, limiting citizens right to know
- official calls citizen by name and labels a liar during public meeting?
- official tells citizens to take care of matters themselves, instead of enforcing ordinances?
- official creates community budget and minimizes board/council or citizens their right to know in advance and give input?
- official changes meetings to accommodate employee creating attendance problems for board/council and citizens.
- official constructs narrative for citizen by saying official held public meetings about which board/council never were informed.
- official pits people against each other to make one feel right and the other one wrong.
- official controls all the decision-making about everything including the responsibilities of a board/council.
- official claims truth is what’s being said at the moment, instead of information in accordance with fact or reality
- official tells citizens to follow the law, but privately doesn’t do it him/herself.