



That You May
HAVE LIFE

A STUDY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

women's
BIBLE STUDY



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LESSON *Four*

Living Water



Jesus was traveling back to Galilee when He encountered a Samaritan woman alone at a well. Rather than ignoring her, as the customs of the day would have encouraged, Jesus engaged. Though initially caught off guard, eventually this woman discovered that Jesus was the Messiah, and He was offering her the hope of eternal life. Her testimony, and the teaching of Jesus, changed her city. After this divine encounter, Jesus performed His second sign by healing an official's son.

SAMARIA

Jews and Samaritans (people from Samaria) did not get along, a tension that began back at the Israelite exile (2 Kings 17). Though the Samaritans worshiped the same God as the Jews, their worship had been influenced by foreigners (the Assyrians). They only held to the first five books of the Old Testament and developed their own temple, creating hostility present in the time of Jesus.¹⁷

JESUS' HUMANITY

Though Jesus was fully God, He was also fully human. This is on display in verse 4 when the text says Jesus was "wearied" from His journey.

ISOLATION

Women normally drew water in groups and at cooler times of the day. Given that this woman came alone to the well around noon, the hottest part of the day, it is possible she did not want the company of others.¹⁸

LIVING WATER

For other references in the Bible to living water, see Isaiah 44:3, 49:10, Zechariah 14:8, Ezekiel 47:9, and Revelation 7:16.

Read John 4 before answering the following questions.

1. Consider the people with whom Jesus interacted in chapters 3 and 4: a religious teacher, an outcast and rejected woman, and a wealthy military leader. How did He offer each one of them new life?

Read John 4:1-26.

2. Jesus asking for a drink was no small request due to great tensions between Jews and Samaritans, as well as cultural barriers between men and women. What does this simple question tell you about Jesus?
3. The woman suspects that Jesus is speaking of human thirst for physical water. But, after reading Jeremiah 2:13 and John 7:37-39, explain in your own words what Jesus is offering in verses 10-15.
4. Describe the woman's past from verses 16-18. Why might Jesus change the subject and bring up her difficult history?

5. Jesus makes some claims in verses 20-25. List them below:

What does it mean to worship in spirit and in truth? (Use Scripture to support your answer if possible.)

Read John 4:27-45.

6. From verses 28-29, what change do you see in the Samaritan woman? Why is this significant?
7. Jesus sought this woman out when society would have said He would be better off ignoring her. Her past, of which He knew every detail, did not scare Him. He pursued her anyway, in her pain and isolation. He does the same with you every single day. Where else in Scripture do you see God pursue those who society might call unworthy? Where in your own life have you seen God's pursuit despite your sin?
8. It is evident in this section that Jesus has different priorities than those of His disciples. From verses 31-38, fill out the chart below noting what you discover about each key word:

 Harvest	
 Sow	
 Reap	

JEREMIAH 2:12-13

“Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

FIVE HUSBANDS

This woman's reasons for five marriages could have ranged from death to divorce. Regardless it is unlikely she was divorced five times. John's gospel appears to “not condemn her as an immoral sinner but highlights her as a seeker of truth.”¹⁹

THIRST

“This thirst is not for natural water, but for God, for eternal life in the presence of God; and the thirst is met not by removing this aching desire but by pouring out the Spirit.”²⁰

PLACE OF WORSHIP

Based on Deuteronomy 12:5, the Samaritans believed God should be worshiped on Mount Gerizim while the Jews understood the location to be Jerusalem, leading to the construction of temples in both places. This debate is what drives the woman's question in verse 20.

DEUTERONOMY 8:3

Jesus is likely referencing Deuteronomy 8:3 in this section. This says, “And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”

NEW MISSION

In eagerness, the Samaritan woman abandons her water jar to tell others about the Messiah. She leaves her old mission behind and starts on a new one. Watch for this drastic change in people as they encounter Jesus throughout the Gospel of John.

TESTIMONY

Verse 42 does not mean the woman’s testimony was unimportant. Rather, her words brought people to experience Jesus firsthand and He proved her story to be true.

In one sentence, what point is Jesus trying to make about the harvest at hand?

9. Read verse 39 and consider the testimony of the Samaritan woman. She encountered Jesus and walked away changed. Now, consider your story. Do you have one to tell or is it yet to be written? Use the following prompts to briefly write your story of life change. (See Appendix: Testimony)

Who were you before Christ?

How did you encounter Christ?

How have you changed since meeting Christ?

Who can you share your story with today?

Read John 4:46-54.

10. What caused the official to approach Jesus? Where might he have heard about Jesus doing miracles?

11. Where in this passage do you find evidence of the official's true faith?
In light of this, what timeless truth do you discover?

12. The miracle of healing the official's son is Jesus' second sign and is meant to teach you something about Him. List the things you see Jesus revealing about Himself through this sign:

13. In John 4, Jesus calls Himself living water, making the point that He alone can satisfy the deepest longings of mankind. This week, where have you looked for satisfaction outside of your relationship with God? How can you continue to cultivate greater intimacy with Him? (See Appendix: Satisfaction)

"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."

— *C.S. Lewis* ²²

DEATH TO LIFE

Do not miss the significance of this healing miracle. Jesus takes a child on the brink of death and brings him back to life.

OFFICIAL

It is likely that this official worked for Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee during this time.²¹

PSALM 42:1-2

"As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"



BIG IDEA

What is your biggest takeaway from this week's lesson?

Reflection:

Take a minute to put yourself in the Samaritan woman's shoes as she is speaking to Jesus. How would you imagine Jesus' tone? His attitude? (Ex: Is He gentle or harsh?) What kind of impression would He make on you? How might this encounter leave a lasting impression on your life?

Notes