

Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 4:1-42

MAIN POINT: Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah.

KEY PASSAGE: John 14:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.

SMALL GROUP OPENING

(10–15 MINUTES)

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LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY

(25–30 MINUTES)

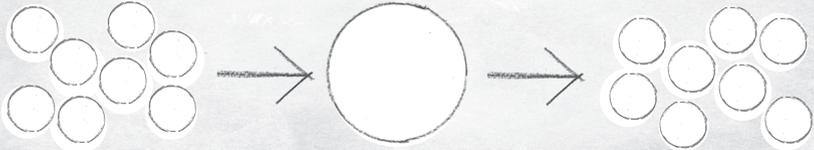
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SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

(25–30 MINUTES)

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

At the time Jesus was on earth, the social food chain went like this: Jews don't talk to Samaritans. The strife between the two groups stretched back hundreds of years, to the Babylonian exile.

When the Babylonians attacked Judah, they moved a large group of God's people away from their homes. But some of the people—the poorest, sickest, least able to work—were left behind in the region that became known as Samaria. The exile lasted 70 years. During that time, those left in Samaria began to mingle with their neighbors to the north. They intermarried and practiced foreign customs. While the Samaritans still believed in God, they adapted their beliefs.

The Jews who returned home from Babylon to rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem rejected this new way of life. They were dedicated to obeying and worshiping God, and they didn't agree with the Samaritans' practices. The Samaritans opposed the Jews' efforts to reestablish their nation. In time, the Jews' hate for the Samaritans grew—so much so, that a Jew traveling from Judea to Galilee would take a longer route to travel around Samaria rather than through it.

Jesus broke down barriers when He traveled to Galilee by way of Samaria. Even more surprising, Jesus stopped at a well around noon and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink. Jewish men did not speak to women in public.

But Jesus was kind to her, and He offered a gift—living water. The woman didn't understand, but Jesus revealed His knowledge of her past. He even gave her a glimpse of the future. The Samaritan woman expected a Messiah to come and fix everything. Jesus said, "I am He."

Explain to kids that the living water Jesus offers is the Holy Spirit. (See John 7:37-39.) It is a gift that He is eager to give us when we ask Him. Those who receive His grace will never be thirsty again.



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Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Set the scene:** Use props such as a chair or bench as the edge of a well, a bucket, and a large water pot.
- **Use dramatic dialogue:** Stand in one spot when telling Jesus' words. Then turn and face that spot as you speak the woman's words.

Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman

John 4:1-42

Jesus had been making disciples in Judea, and His disciples baptized people. Now Jesus had more followers than John the Baptist. **Jesus began traveling back to Galilee. He traveled through Samaria and stopped in a town at the well. Jesus' disciples went into town to buy food.**

While Jesus was at the well, a Samaritan woman came to get water from the well.

"Give Me a drink," Jesus said to the woman.

The woman was surprised. "You're a Jew," she said. "Why are You talking to me? I'm a Samaritan."

Jesus said, "I asked you for a drink. You don't know who I am. If you did, you would have asked Me for a drink, and I would give you living water."

The woman was confused. "Sir," she said, "This well is deep, and You don't have a bucket. Where do You get this 'living water'?"

Jesus said, "Anyone who drinks this well water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water I give will never, ever get thirsty again! In fact, the water I give will become a well inside you, and you will have eternal life." Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit, but the woman did not understand.

"Sir," she said, "give me this water. If I'm not thirsty, I won't have to keep coming to this well to get water."

"Go get your husband," Jesus said.

"I don't have a husband," the woman replied.

Jesus knew she was telling the truth. He said, "You don't have a husband now, but you've had five husbands."

Jesus was right. “I see You are a prophet,” the woman said. Maybe this prophet could explain something to her. She said, “The Samaritans worship here on a mountain, but the Jews say we need to worship at the temple in Jerusalem.”

Jesus said, “Soon you will not need to be in either of those places to worship God in spirit and in truth.”

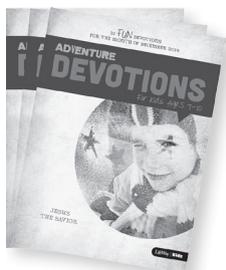
The woman said, **“I know the Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.”**

Then Jesus said, **“He is talking to you now. I am the Messiah.”**

The woman left and told the people in her town, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Messiah?”

Many Samaritans believed in Jesus because of what the woman said. They asked Jesus to stay with them, and He stayed for two days. Many more believed because of what Jesus said. They told the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this really is the Savior of the world.”

Christ Connection: Jesus offered the woman something no one else could give her—living water. Jesus wasn't talking about water that she could physically drink; Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit who would satisfy her spiritual thirst. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who come to Him by faith.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that the Samaritan woman went home to tell others about Jesus. Peter and John later said that Christians can't help but share the good news! (Acts 4:20) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 4:1-42

MAIN POINT: Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah.

KEY PASSAGE: John 14:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them about a time they felt left out of a group. What made them feel left out? How did they respond?

SAY • Most of us will feel left out at some point in our lives. If we see people having fun or doing something good without us, we often feel sad, angry, or jealous. In our story today, we will learn about a woman who might have felt left out of God's promises. What do you think Jesus would say to someone feeling left out?

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Water You Doing?” activity page. Instruct them to write or draw as many different ways to use water as they can think of. For example, bathing, drinking, putting out fires, and so forth.

SAY • We use water for many different things. Jesus and a woman talked about a special kind of water—living water. What do you think that means?

- “Water You Doing?” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Would you rather drink ... ?

Give the kids a series of scenarios and ask them what they would rather drink in each one. Then give them different options and ask them to run to one side of the room or the other depending on their preference. For example, on a hot day, would they rather drink sweet iced tea or warm green tea? On a cold day, would they rather drink hot cocoa or spiced apple cider?

SAY • We drink a lot of different things in many different situations, but at the end of the day, we drink things to satisfy our thirst! If you could drink something that would keep you from ever getting thirsty again, would you? Do you think there is any such drink? We will learn more about it in our story today!

OPTION 2: Cracker challenge!

Give each kid five crackers. Challenge them to eat all five crackers and then try to whistle. Any kid who eats all five crackers and whistles wins. Keep water close by for each child to prevent choking.

SAY • That was a fun game, though it was pretty messy! Crackers soak up all the moisture in your mouth, making it really hard to whistle. When we get really thirsty, water is usually the best choice to drink. Today we will learn about a kind of water that you only have to drink once! Do you think that sounds like physical water or maybe something more important than that? Let's find out!



- crackers
- paper towels for cleanup
- water

Tip: To avoid a choking hazard with this game, stress to kids that it is not a race; they do not have to rush to whistle first.

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

• leader attire
• water bottles

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

[Large Group Leader enters wearing festive clothing and a brightly colored traffic vest. He or she is carrying water bottles.]

LEADER • Welcome back, everyone! We had a pretty scary thing happen yesterday. One of the street festival visitors passed out from the heat! We were so concerned, but he ended up being just fine after we got him into some shade with some cool water to drink.

In fact, to make sure it doesn't happen again, I've been stocking up on water bottles to give away to anyone who needs them. It's funny, but water is something we often take for granted. We don't usually realize how vitally important it is until we don't have enough of it. Actually, that reminds me of a Bible story. How about I tell you about a kind of water that you only have to drink once?

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Sounds pretty crazy, doesn't it? Well, trust me when I say it's not. In fact, Jesus said that He is living water! Remember that we are trying to search the Bible to learn about Jesus based on what He said. *Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.*

• Big Picture Question Poster

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Two weeks ago we learned that **Jesus told Nicodemus he must be born again**. Last week we learned that **Jesus came from heaven to earth**. In both of those stories, we saw that the way Jesus interacted with people and the things Jesus said about Himself revealed that He is the Messiah. This week we will hear a story about Jesus and a woman who was kind of an outsider. She was a Samaritan, which means that she was from Samaria and part of a people group that most Jews really disliked. We will see how Jesus treated her and learn what Jesus said. The story is called “Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman.”

• Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 4:1-42. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman.”

LEADER • Oh my goodness! Remember that Samaritans were people the Jews did not like. When the Jews were in exile, some of God's people stayed in the land and married people who did not worship God. This was against God's law, so the Jews thought they were better than the Samaritans. But Jesus did not

• Bibles
• “Jesus Met a Samaritan Woman” video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

treat this woman that way. He loved her and treated her with kindness. He began to tell her about living water.

At first, the Samaritan woman thought Jesus was talking about physical water that would keep her from getting thirsty again. Though that would be a helpful trick for water, Jesus was talking about something much better than water. Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit.

As Jesus and the woman talked, she could tell He was no ordinary man. He knew things about her that no one else did. At first, she thought He was a prophet. Jesus is more than a prophet. **Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah.** She was amazed and rushed to gather her neighbors and bring them to meet Jesus!

The woman at the well was a sinner and a Samaritan, but Jesus still offered her the Holy Spirit if she believed in Him. The Holy Spirit fills us when we have faith in Jesus. He is like water that springs up and overflows. He gives life and power to Christians and satisfies our desire to be near God.

Christ connection

LEADER • We are all born in sin. We are dead and empty inside. Thankfully, Jesus offers us the Holy Spirit—the living water—just as He offered Him to the Samaritan woman. ***Jesus said He is the Messiah.*** Jesus came to earth to live a sinless life. He died the death we deserve, taking our sin on Himself. On the third day, God showed everyone His mighty power and raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus' sacrifice was

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

enough! Sin had been defeated and death lost its power over people who trust in Jesus. When Jesus went back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to be our Helper. The Holy Spirit is given to us when we trust in Jesus. He helps us love and obey God. He gives us power to overcome evil and glorify God. In that way, the Holy Spirit's power flows out of us to affect the people around us.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 14:6. Then sing "I Am the Way."

- Key Passage Poster
- "I Am the Way" song

LEADER • Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah—the Savior God sent to save the world from sin by dying on the cross in our place. Only Jesus lived a perfectly obedient life, which means only Jesus' death paid the penalty for our sin. Our key passage reminds us that there is no other way to God except through faith in Jesus.

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Have you ever had something wonderful that other people wanted? Did you share it or keep it for yourself? Think about that and watch this video.

- "Unit 21, Session 3" discussion starter video

Show the "Unit 21, Session 3" discussion starter video. Discuss with your group how the thirsty people in the video probably felt. Would the kids have shared their water in a similar situation? Ask about times they have had the chance to share something with someone in need.

LEADER • When people don't know Jesus, they are thirsty for God's presence and for life. They may not even know they need Jesus, but they do. All sinners need

Jesus. He is the only way to have life!

The Holy Spirit gives us life when we trust in Jesus. Then, we can share the gospel with others to help them find life in Jesus too! The best part is, no matter how many people we share the gospel with, we can never “run out” of living water. The more people who have faith in Jesus, the better!

• “God Is Here” song

Sing (4 minutes)

LEADER • God takes such good care of us. He sent us Jesus to satisfy our need for Him. He made the way for us to be forgiven and filled with the Holy Spirit. Let’s sing to show Him how much we love Him.

Sing together “God Is Here.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Help us to trust You more each day. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit. Help us to see the way You have given us life. Give us courage and opportunities to share the truth about Jesus with everyone we meet.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. You may provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Small Group LEADER

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- index cards
- pen

Write each word or phrase of the key passage on a separate index card. Make two sets. Lay out the index cards to form a grid. Challenge the kids to take turns looking for matching index cards. Once all matches have been found, arrange the cards in order and read the key passage together. For an added challenge, kids must find the matching pairs in the order they will need to be arranged.

SAY • Our key passage is a very famous verse in the Bible.

Jesus said these words during the last supper He ate with His disciples before going to die on the cross. Jesus told them this verse to help them remember that He is the only One who can give them life with God the Father. When He was arrested, the disciples felt afraid, discouraged, and confused. Jesus wanted them to remember that He is the Messiah even if they were afraid. The same is true for us today. Even when things seem to be going wrong, Jesus is still the Messiah and the only way to be with God.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Instruct kids to work

together to retell the story. Then help them look up John 4:1-42. Ask guiding questions to remind them of the specific details they may have forgotten.

Example questions:

- Where were Jesus and His disciples at the start of the story? (*Judea, John 4:3*)
- Where were they going? (*Galilee, John 4:3*)
- Whom did Jesus meet? (*a Samaritan woman, John 4:7*)
- What did Jesus ask for? (*a drink of water, John 4:7*)
- Why was it strange for Jesus to talk to a Samaritan? (*Jews did not interact with Samaritans, John 4:9*)
- What did Jesus offer? (*living water, John 4:10*)
- Why was the Samaritan woman confused? (*She thought He was speaking of physical water, John 4:11*)
- **Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.**
- Whom did she gather to tell about Jesus? (*the men/people of the town, John 4:28-30*)
- What did the Samaritans realize about Jesus? (*Jesus is the Savior of the world, John 4:42*)

SAY • Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah. She was thirsty not only for water, but for a relationship with God. Only Jesus can provide the way for us to be reunited with God. The woman went and told the other people in her town about Jesus. At first, some believed in Him because of what she told them, but when they met Jesus and He stayed with them, they believed because of His words and actions to show them who He is.

In our lives, we can tell others about Jesus, but most importantly we can show them the Bible, where

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Jesus' words are recorded. ***Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.***

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Water wells

- "Living Water Label" printable
- water bottles
- scissors
- tape

Before class, print many copies of the "Living Water Label" printable. Help kids cut out the labels and wrap them around water bottles.

Organize an event to raise money for a well building organization of your choice. This could be a rummage sale, car wash, or some other fund raising event. At the event, sell the re-labeled water bottles to raise additional funds.

SAY • Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah.

He offered her living water, which was a reference to the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, people in other parts of the world don't have access to clean drinking water, much less the Word of God to tell them about Jesus' living water. Some ministries build wells for people who need clean water. Constructing wells gives Christians a good opportunity to meet lost people who are thirsty for Jesus and tell them about Him. Then the people in have access to drinking water and living water!

OPTION 2: Chain reaction

Play a game of regular tag. Select a child to be *It*. When she tags another kid, he becomes *It* and must tag someone else. End the game after a few minutes. Next, play version of tag where each person tagged becomes *It* while the original kid remains *It*. See how long it takes to tag each person in the new version.

SAY • In our first version of the game, *It* stopped tagging



after tagging a new person. In that way, the game could have gone on forever, with no one ever really winning. By changing the way we played, allowing each person to keep tagging others, we were able to tag everyone very quickly!

In a way, this is like how we share the gospel. If you only ever share the gospel with one person, the good news can't spread as fast as if you kept sharing. In our story, the Samaritan woman told her whole town about Jesus, and they all believed in Him. Whom can you tell about Jesus this week?

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a time they thought they needed one thing, when they really needed something else even more. For example, needing stitches instead of an adhesive bandage, or a full, healthy meal instead of a quick snack.

SAY • Sometimes we think we need one thing, when there is really something we need even more. If you are hungry and sick, you need food, but you might need medicine more. People who don't know Jesus often have real physical needs, but their need for Jesus is even greater. How can we help meet that need?

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray, asking God to help your group look at people's greatest needs as well as their lesser needs.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.