

6. While worship is not the point of the passage, in vs. 19-24 Jesus allows the conversation to center around worship. To what end? *(He is surfacing the object of her worship, not stressing the location of worship. Again, he is revealing himself.)*
7. Is Jesus the object of your worship, or is worship style, lyrics, volume or location the object of your worship?
8. Jesus said that his "food" was to do the will of the Father and to do his work. How did that sustain him? How can doing God's will sustain us?
9. Jesus spoke of water and food to both the Samaritan woman and the disciples, respectively. In both cases they thought he was talking about the physical elements needed to sustain life. Jesus was talking about something greater. He is both the Giver of life and is life itself. What does that mean?
10. Is Jesus the reason for your existence? Is he the reason you got up this morning?
11. The Samaritans were seemingly an "unlikely" choice for the gospel message, yet they readily believed. Who are the "Samaritans" in your life? (bulletin question)

John 4:1-42

Lesson 6
For November 2, 2008

Dr. Jerry Nelson

LEADER'S GUIDE

For discussion *following* the sermon on November 2, 2008

The Samaritan Woman

What gives you life? Are there people, circumstances or events that bring joy, enthusiasm and vitality to life? Perhaps it is a job well done, children, the love of your life, the perfect golf score, or a vibrant relationship with the Triune God. Some people have trouble answering that question. For them, the joys of life are often crowded out by the cares of life, and they are left with little to look forward to. Routine, boredom, relational pain, fear or strife can lead to a passive resignation about tomorrow. Even in our greatest joys we may experience emptiness. Is this life all there is, and if so, what's the point? In this passage we will consider:

Key Points

Jesus: The Living Water

Jesus: The Messiah

Jesus: The Redeemer

As Jesus passed through Samaria he encountered a woman who came to a well for water—water that would sustain her very ordinary life. Undoubtedly, her days were spent on the kind of mundane chores and events that make up our lives. We know that she was tired of coming to the well for water and would gladly have welcomed some “living water” so that life would be less taxing. Sound familiar? We also know by her brief history that her days were arduous and full of relational carnage; that she had a form of religion and understood Jewish culture. Truly this woman must have had little in her world that gave her “life”. Yet we don't detect despair. On the contrary, we find a sense of hope and anticipation as she looked forward to the day when a “Messiah” would come

and “explain everything” to her. Little did she know that her quest for water that day would lead to a thirst for living water, which would ultimately give her the words every Jew of that day longed to hear: “I who speak to you am he.” Just imagine what happened as those words penetrated her heart, as her ignorance turned to knowledge—a knowledge which led to belief and ultimate redemption! Her conversation with Jesus not only changed her life; it transformed a despised Samaritan town.

Jesus Christ is not only the sustainer of life; he is life itself! All of life flows from him, and the point of his existence is to “do the will of the Father”—to point all men to the Giver of life eternal. Have you ever longed for a life that was easier, a time where you no longer have to go to the “well” everyday to sustain life? What would it be like if you were spiritually satisfied with “living water” and didn’t have to earn your way—work so hard—to experience God? For those who truly believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the living water of grace flows freely, no matter how “bad” we have been (like the woman at the well) or how far off our theology may be (like Nicodemus). Jesus is the living water that truly is “enough” for our spiritually parched lives. For you, is Jesus enough?

Leader’s Guide

Personal Preparation

In the Gospel of John we are repeatedly asked to examine the evidence that will lead us to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. The redundancy would make it easy for us to pass over many of these passages (because they are so familiar) with an attitude of “Yes, I believe...let’s move on.” Jesus revealed himself to the woman, and she believed. Jesus continued to reveal himself to the disciples, and although they believed him, many didn’t *really* believe until after the resurrection. As you think about the continuum of belief, consider your response to Jesus. Is Jesus the ultimate reason for your existence, and how much of your belief in him impacts your everyday life? Is he why you got up this morning? If so, thank him for the grace that brought you to this place.

Group Preparation

Consider the significance of “living water” in Jeremiah 2:13. Israel had “rejected the fresh, ‘running’ supply of God and his faithful goodness, choosing instead the stagnant waters of cisterns they themselves prepared, discovering even then that their cisterns were cracked, and leaving them with nothing to sustain life and blessing.”¹ Broken cisterns exist today in the church. Some in your group may “believe”, but the vessels that once treasured “living water” are now broken, filled with things incompatible with the living Christ. If anyone comes to mind, pray for them this week, that the Spirit of God will convict them in just one area of “incompatibility”.

¹ *The Gospel According to John* by D. A. Carson, pg. 219

Discussion Questions

1. What is the point of life?
2. What makes you feel fully alive? Do you think you have to work at feeling alive?
3. Even though we can enjoy all of the good things in life, we can still come to a place of dissatisfaction and emptiness (*Video of Patriots Tom Brady*). Why does satisfaction seem temporary or elusive?
4. Jesus said that he could provide the woman with "living water." In practical terms, what is this "living water" today? What does it do? What thirst does it quench? Does it need constant replenishing?
5. After Jesus offered the woman living water, he gently confronted her with her past. Is there a connection? (*Jesus revealed the true nature of her thirst/need, the need to be forgiven of her sin, in order to reveal himself as redeemer.*)