

Week 5: John 4:1-42

Key Theme: Living Water

SEE my Life: Life Map & Fasting Reflection Icebreaker (15 mins)

Share briefly how your time of fasting and reflection with your life map and Psalm 139 went. What is God reminding you of or teaching you through this experience?

Option: Share a time when you were literally really thirsty. For instance, maybe you can remember playing outside as a kid and how you felt before you drank from the hose. Maybe you were on a hike or your car broke down and you were without water for several hours. Whatever the case, share a memory of when you were thirsty. How did you feel when that thirst was quenched?

SEE Jesus: John 4:1-42 (30 mins)

This is a long passage, but it's important to have a sense of both Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman and her response. Encourage your group to read the passage ahead of time a few times before coming to group. You may still take a few minutes to read 4:1-28 aloud. You could even have some volunteers take different roles—narrator, Jesus, the woman—to add some variety.

Discuss the following questions. Consider moving from a brief pair and share on question one to a larger discussion setting.

1. What stands out to you from the text? What word or phrase seems significant to you? What questions do you have about the text?
2. How would you describe the conversation between Jesus and the woman? What is his attitude towards her? Her attitude towards him?
3. What does Jesus reveal about the woman? Think about both the facts that he shares and what he uncovers about her on a deeper level?
4. What does the woman discover about Jesus? What does this process look like? Is it more immediate or progressive?
5. Why does the woman bring the topic of worship into the conversation? How does Jesus respond? What is he trying to teach her?
6. What ultimately does Jesus promise through his offer of "living water"?
7. How are the Samaritan woman and Nicodemus similar? How are they different? What might John be trying to show us through these two encounters?

SEE my Life: True Worship (30 mins)

As you reflect on Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, think about your own encounter with Jesus. Some of the squares on your life map might help you here as you process the following questions. Consider breaking into smaller and/or same gender groupings for these questions. Don't feel any pressure to get to all three sets of questions. The key here is to try to help everyone see themselves and their true state of worship more clearly.

- Think about the season of life in which you first really encountered Jesus, not as a little child, but as a young adult or adult. Do you see more of yourself in

Nicodemus or in the Samaritan woman? Your experience is probably not as extreme as these two represent, but where were you on the spectrum?

- The conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman is one that ultimately focuses not on where we worship, but on whom and how we worship. Think of worship, not in the sense of a “worship service” or singing, but more broadly in the sense of what I give “worth” to. How has the “who” or “what” and the “how” of your worship changed in the last year? Think about filling in these blanks. I used to worship, or give ultimate worth, care, and concern to _____. My worship of _____ looked like _____ and my desires were for _____. But now I _____. I see my desires changing by _____. Maybe your experience doesn’t “fit” these blanks. Feel free to simply describe your current feelings towards God—i.e. gratitude, love, frustration, distance, confusion. Have the courage to be real here and not give the clichéd answer and feel like you have to “perform” for the group.
- Through his conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, Jesus identifies obstacles to true worship. For Nicodemus, his sparkling resume, education, power, and prestige kept him from seeing Jesus clearly. For the Samaritan woman, her checkered past and relationships, were evidence of her longing for something other than God. What are the obstacles that are keeping you from seeing Jesus clearly and worshipping the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit fully?

SEE the practices of Jesus: Fasting (15 mins to explain and close in prayer)

Continue with your practice of fasting this week. Skip at least one meal and purposefully spend 30-60 minutes reading and reflecting on Psalm 42 (especially verses 1-5) and John 10:10: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.” Spend some time reflecting and praying in the following ways.

1. Ask God to identify for you what your true longings and desires are for. “As the deer pants for streams of water,” writes the Psalmist, “so my soul pants for you, my God.” Ask God to reveal what might be keeping your soul from thirsting for Him. What are you truly worshipping?
2. Ask God to reveal Himself to you more fully. Ask God—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—for you to see more clearly so that you can worship more fully.
3. As you reflect on the truth of John 10:10, ask God for protection from the Evil One, who would seek to distort your thinking about God and distract you from truly worshipping Him.
4. Thank God for the abundant life, the full life that he promises. Thank Him specifically for the ways that you have already experienced that life, for the future full life that He will promises—both on this earth and for eternity.

Just as the Samaritan woman shared her testimony with her community, so too are we called to share. To close the meeting today, pray for each other in smaller groups, asking God to work through our testimonies. Take some time to pray for those names who don't know Jesus—the one's you've been praying for daily. Also, start asking the Lord to help you SEE areas of your own testimony as a connection to help that person SEE Jesus.