

Icebreaker:

Do you have a favorite “watering hole” where you like to hang out?

Read this week's scripture and discuss:

1. In what sense was it “necessary” for Jesus to go through Samaria (John 4:4-5)?
2. Jesus stops at the well because he is physically tired (John 4:6). Is it strange to think about Jesus growing weary?
3. The woman in John 4 goes to the well for her daily chore of fetching water. Instead, she meets Jesus. Have you experienced times when you were going about your daily routine and unexpectedly encountered Jesus?
4. Jesus crossed barriers and chose to engage in conversation with one who was very different than him and whose views (e.g. where to worship) were at odds. How easy is it for you to seek after someone different from you, or with differing views, and engage in meaningful conversation?
5. Jesus says that true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth. Reading again verses 21-24, what do you think Jesus means to worship in spirit and in truth? What could that mean for our worship today?
6. Why do you think this woman's witness was so effective? Does this give us a different perspective about how we might be witnesses to others about who Jesus is?
7. Back on January 5 in worship, we asked: How will you thirst for God this year? Reading this week about Jesus and the Samaritan woman, we ask: What are you thirsting for most in life right now?

prayer requests

- > Prayers of healing for Adrienne Bough and Theresa Beardsley.
- > Prayers of comfort for Don Paterson and family in the death of his wife Star and for Jenny and Phil Isenbarger and family in the death of Jenny's father.

There are so many familiar and wonderful stories of Jesus interacting with regular people in John's gospel. Jesus and Nicodemus in chapter 3; Jesus healing the man by the pool in chapter 5; Jesus healing the man born blind in chapter 9; and here with the woman at the well in chapter 4. All of these people need something (born again, sight, healing, faith, forgiveness). We also need encounters with Jesus in our everyday lives. Let's learn something new from this familiar story and also learn how to thirst for Jesus, and to share that thirst with our own townspeople.

1. Jesus and the disciples were walking north from Judea to Galilee. They had to go through Samaria (or choose a longer way around Samaria) where the Samaritans lived, who had set up an alternate place for worship on Mt. Gerizim. It was necessary for Jesus to go through Samaria and to the well to have this “divine appointment” with this woman so she could meet the Messiah and share that with neighbors.
2. Jesus was fully human and fully divine (read Philippians 2:5-11). As a man, Jesus got tired, had to eat and sleep, would sweat, could get angry (overturning tables), laughed and loved his friends and family. It's a little strange to think of Jesus as human. Yet as a man, he could relate to our weaknesses and temptations (read Hebrews 4:14-16).
3. She's going to get water at noon most likely to avoid meeting others who would know her reputation for being promiscuous. Jesus meets her where she is. He relates thirst and the need for water to himself as the living water. Maybe you've encountered Jesus at Kroger, Starbucks, on Facebook, or on a walk. Be open to meeting Jesus, seeing Jesus, wherever you go.
4. The Samaritans were mostly made up of foreigners who had intermarried with Jews, and set up their own mountain to worship on, instead of the Temple in Jerusalem. Most Jews did not want to associate with Samaritans. A Jewish man would not typically talk to a woman alone either. Yet Jesus crossed lines and interacted with her. Share how that may be hard for you. And share how we might do that in our lives today.
5. Jesus calls the woman (and us) to worship in Spirit and in truth. The Truth is Jesus (John 14:6). Worshiping in spirit can mean both in our spirit as we connect to God, who is Spirit. One author writes, “Our spirit owes its existence and vibrancy to the Spirit of God.” This does not mean we have to worship with a certain level of emotion or with certain parameters, but trying to connect our spirits with God's Spirit and worship with a sense of truth as Jesus is the Truth.
6. The woman was an unexpected source, an unexpected witness. She also shared that this Jesus knew everything she did, and asked “Could this be the Christ?” By who she was, by her excitement, and by what she said - she got their attention and was an effective witness. If we can maintain our “wonder” and our excitement for Jesus, it makes us more effective as well.
7. Jesus is thirsty. The woman is getting water. Jesus says he is the living water. He tells her his living water can quench her thirst forever. What are you thirsting for now? How are you thirsting for God this year? Engage in spiritual practices that help you keep thirsting for God.