

**Week # 3**  
**“Just Give Me Jesus” Series**  
**Cedar Grove Church – February 28, 2016**  
**Leaders Guide**

**“The Making & Remaking of a Samaritan Woman”**

**John 4:1-42**

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**GROUP DISCUSSION:**

(Focus on the questions you feel might be most helpful for your group. You probably will not be able to get through all of them. Feel free to change or add questions to better fit your group).

1. What do you make of the phrase in John 4:4 that Jesus “had to go through Samaria?”
  - Geographically, the shortest distance from south to north was to go through Samaria, but the custom was for Jews to go the extra distance to go around it, avoiding contact.
  - There was something of a divine appointment at work here that Jesus seemed aware of. He chose to not follow the custom of avoidance but to take the direct route. In his purpose and mission, there was a Samaritan woman (and village) that needed him.
  
2. Share what you know about the animosity between many Jews and the Samaritans. Does this help you understand any better why it was shocking that Jesus spoke to this woman?
  - There was a centuries old feud between the Jews and Samaritans. In 720 B.C. when the Assyrians invaded and captured Samaria, they resettled it with people from other nations who intermarried with the Jewish residents. To “true” Jews this loss of racial purity was an unforgivable crime. The southern kingdom, when invaded and carried off to Babylon, did not lose their identity and later these “pure” exiles returned to Jerusalem. They refused the help of the northern mixed Samaritan people to rebuild the temple and deep animosity ensued. This quarrel started about 450 B.C. and was still bitter in Jesus’ time.
  
3. When Jesus asked the woman from Sychar for a drink from Jacob’s well he broke cultural taboos. Why do you think this did not bother him – that he was willing to do this?
  - Strict Rabbis forbade a Rabbi to greet a woman in public or even to speak to his own wife, daughter or sister in public. To be seen doing so meant the end of his reputation.
  - Yet here was Jesus breaking through the barriers of nationality and orthodox Jewish custom. “The son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost!” (Luke 19:10)
  
4. If we look at this encounter as an example of how to witness, or to share our faith with someone else, what are some principles or guidelines you observe at work here in what Jesus said and did?
  - Using common items at hand to being conversation (thirst, water).
  - Creating curiosity (“dangle the bait, don’t jam the hook!). “I have water that . . .”
  - Not getting sidetracked by “religious arguments” (best place to worship).
  - Testifying to the power of salvation – living water that will enable you to never need to drink again. Etc. etc.

5. The role of “shame” seems to have been powerful in this woman’s life. Have you experienced shame at work in your life or someone you know well and what was its effect?
  - Explain how shame comes from the enemy to keep us away from God. God brings guilt that leads to conviction of sin, righteousness and salvation. Shame is of the enemy!
6. What do you understand Jesus wants to do with your shame, your pain, and how does he do this?
  - Jesus wants to tend to our hurts, carry our pain and shame, and heal our hearts and life.
7. Among other things, we are each emotional beings. Was there anything in this story that touched you emotionally, and if so, how did you feel?
  - This could be different for each person present, depending on how this account touched them and where they are currently at in their relationship with Jesus.
8. What is this “living water” that Jesus spoke of?
  - This is the good news of the gospel message – that he has come to offer us his salvation as a free gift, available to anyone and everyone who will receive.
9. Have you experienced this “living water?” If yes, what are some specific ways in which your life has been touched by drinking this living water of Jesus?
  - Many responses may be given of how people have sensed God’s healing, forgiving, saving touch on their lives, circumstances, families, etc. Encourage sharing.
10. The speaker on Sunday described the progression of the interaction of Jesus with the Samaritan woman as: “I see you, I know you, I love you, and you belong to me.” Have you experienced this progression in your life and, if so, share with the group how it happened for you.
  - Some fear God. Some do not think He could care about them. Many feel there is no way God could accept and love them. Yet the reality is, that God wants us to know him and that we belong to him. Not condemnation, but salvation is His desire and plan for us.
11. If you have not experienced this yet, would you like to? What do you think you need to know or do to realize this in your life? (Feel free to ask your Life Group leader to help you with this).
  - Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in how you lead into this. But if there is someone in your group who has not yet experienced God’s gift of forgiveness and salvation, this could be their time to do so, just as it was for the Samaritan woman.

## **PRAYER:**

Make time to share needs and close in prayer – also praying about any needs that may have been shared in the course of discussion. Also give thanks for ways that were shared in which God may have touched and transformed members of your group.

It may be an idea this week to divide the group up into smaller groups, e.g. men in one, women in another, or in 2’s and 3’s, to allow for more sharing and praying. Seek the Lord’s leadership for this.