

Unit 21 • Session 4
Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Bible Passage:

John 4

story point:

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

Key Passage:

John 3:16

Big Picture Question:

What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

INTRODUCE THE STORY

(10–15 minutes)

TEACH THE STORY

(25–30 minutes)

APPLY THE STORY

(25–30 minutes)

Leader Bible Study

At the time Jesus was on earth, Jews and Samaritans didn't get along. 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 foreign beliefs as well.

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, so 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 her 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.) The Holy Spirit is a gift that He is eager to give us when we ask Him. Those who receive His grace will never be thirsty again.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

John 4

Jesus had been teaching in Judea. He **and His disciples** began traveling back to Galilee. They **traveled through Samaria and stopped in a town with a 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. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

The woman was surprised. **"Why are You talking to me?" she asked. "You're a Jew, and 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. She **said, "Sir, 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 be 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, "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. Jesus stayed in their town 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 offers something better than physical water; He gives us Himself. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who comes to Him by faith. We can worship Him as Lord and Savior wherever we are.

Introduce the Story

Session Title: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Bible Passage: John 4

Story Point: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

Key Passage: John 3:16

Big Picture Question: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

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. Prompt kids to share about their favorite drinks. Which drinks are best when you're really thirsty?

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Big Picture Jars" on the activity page. Guide kids to use the pictures in the jars to fill in the answer to the big picture question.

Say • Do you believe that all people are special? The Bible says they are! In the Bible story we are going to hear today, Jesus traveled through a place called Samaria and met a woman who some people did not think was very special or important. Do you think Jesus talked to her? Why? Let's find out more.

Session starter (10 minutes)

Option 1: Partner poll

Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Form pairs of kids. Instruct kids to number their papers from 1 to 10. Explain that you will give 10 prompts, and kids should write down the answers they think best apply to their partner. Then read the prompts again and allow partners to share their answers with each other. Invite volunteers to share what they wrote and let the partner reveal if the answer is correct or not.

Say • How well do you know other people? In today's Bible story, Jesus met a woman who had never met Him before. He knew everything about her!

Option 2: Reversing arrow demonstration

Draw two parallel left-facing arrows on white heavyweight paper. Position the paper behind a glass cup so kids can see the arrows through the glass.

Slowly pour water into the glass until the water level is just above the bottom arrow. The arrow should flip horizontally, appearing as a right-facing arrow.

Move the cup to show kids that the drawn arrows still face to the left. Return the cup to its place in front of the arrows. Add more water so the top arrow appears to change directions as well.

Say • How did that happen? [*Invite kids to explain.*] Nothing is special about this water; this demonstration is an example of *refraction*—light bending when it passes through different materials (like air, glass, and water). In the story we will hear today, Jesus told a woman He could give her living water. It wasn't a trick, though. Let's find out what Jesus was talking about.

Transition to teach the story

Teach the Story

Session Title: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Bible Passage: John 4

Story Point: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

Key Passage: John 3:16

Big Picture Question: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Countdown

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

[Leader enters wearing dark pants, a solid-color shirt, and disposable gloves. Leader wears a stethoscope around his or her neck and carries a first aid kit.]

Leader • Hi there! It's me, [*your name*]. Did you know that paramedics don't always travel in ambulances?

Sometimes we set up a tent and work an event—like a concert or soccer game. When a large crowd gathers, especially when it's hot outside, there is a good chance someone will end up needing medical attention. We can treat everything from minor scrapes to sunburns and dehydration. As medical professionals, we never refuse treatment to anyone. Even if the person was injured because he made a poor decision, every life is important.

I want to share a Bible story with you today about a time Jesus encountered someone who was surprised that Jesus paid any attention to her.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Our big picture question fits right into our Bible story. I'll ask the question, and then I want you to shout out the answer: ***What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.*** Isn't that great? God wants all people—no matter where they are from, what they look like, or what activities they like—to know Him. He created each of us in His image and He gave us His Word, the Bible, so we can know what is true about God and about ourselves.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

Leader • Jesus spent a lot of time with people while He was on earth. He is *Immanuel*—"God with us"! Who are some of the people we've heard about the last few weeks? [*Invite kids to respond.*] We saw that **people came to Jesus, and He healed them.** He met with people in the synagogue, and **Jesus taught that He is the Messiah.**

Did everyone believe Him? Not exactly. Many people didn't understand. Nicodemus went to talk to Jesus at night. **Jesus taught that we must be born again.** In today's story, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman," we will see how Jesus interacted with all people—not just Jews.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman."

Leader • Jesus and His disciples were traveling from Judea to Galilee. The fastest way home was to go through

Samaria. Most Jews took the long way around because Jews and Samaritans didn't get along. But Jesus went through Samaria and stopped at a well there. Whom did Jesus meet at the well? (*a Samaritan woman*) She was surprised that a Jewish man would talk to her. Jesus offered the woman living water. **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.**

What did the woman learn about Jesus? Look at John 4:19. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] The woman believed He was a prophet. She was right, but that's not all Jesus is. What else did the woman learn about Jesus? Look at John 4:25-26. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] Jesus revealed that He is the Messiah she was waiting for. The woman told other people from her town about Jesus, and Jesus stayed with them for two days. What did they learn about who Jesus is? Look at John 4:42. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*]

Christ connection

Leader • Jesus offers something better than physical water; He gives us Himself. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who comes to Him by faith. He completely satisfies us. He is the Prophet who gives us power to worship Him as Lord and Savior wherever we are. Jesus is the Messiah who brings salvation for all who trust in Him.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 21, Session 4" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how Jesus showed love to people while He was on earth. Guide them to discuss how we can show love to others, especially those who might seem hard to love.

Leader • ***What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.***

Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the "Walk Church in Prayer" printable and ask a volunteer to read the caption. Stop and pray, or ask for a volunteer to pray according to the provided prompt.

Leader • The Ratners and the Christians at Walk Church believe in the power of prayer and that the Holy Spirit will help them share Jesus with more people. **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.** Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will help the Ratners and missionaries all over the world.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 3:16.

Leader • Everyone is in danger of perishing, or dying and being separated from God forever. The Bible tells us a day is coming when everyone will have to pay for sin. Jesus is saying here that He is willing to pay for our sins.

We just need to trust Him, follow Him, and believe that He is able to save us from the wrath of God that is coming on the world that God loves. This rescue is by faith. Now we are waiting for Jesus to return and when He does, life with Him will begin and never end. That's good news! Let's sing.

Lead boys and girls in singing "In This Way (John 3:16)."

Sing (4 minutes)

Open your Bible and read aloud Psalm 99:4-5.

Leader • Jesus is worthy. He is just, righteous, and holy. He knows our every weakness and loves us. We can worship the Lord wherever we are. Let's sing to Him.

Sing together "Take It to the Lord."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

Leader • Lord God, apart from You we are thirsty! You provide living water—Your Spirit—through Jesus. Forgive us for seeking satisfaction in things like popularity, other people, or personal comfort. We need You. Give us boldness to share the good news of the gospel with others. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

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. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the Story

Session Title: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Bible Passage: John 4

Story Point: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

Key Passage: John 3:16

Big Picture Question: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Before the session, write the key passage and words and phrases on 15 cups. Make two sets. Mix up the order of each set. Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:16 together.

Form two teams. Give each team a set of cups and challenge them to build a pyramid, arranging the cups in order with the first word of the key passage on the top row. This may require some planning.

Say • How did God show His love for us? He sent His Son to rescue us!

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to John 4. Explain that Jesus traveled through the land of Samaria on His way to Galilee from Judea. [*Display the New Testament Israel Map and point out the land of Judea (J3), the land of Samaria (F4), and the land of Galilee (C5).*]

Say • **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.**

Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 4:13-14. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

What is living water? Where does it come from? *Guide kids to recall that Jesus offered living water to the Samaritan woman. The living water Jesus was talking about is the Holy Spirit. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who trust in Him. He saves us from our sins and gives us eternal life.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 7:37-39.)

Why is sharing your testimony important? *Help kids recognize the power of the Samaritan woman's testimony. She told others in her town what Jesus had done, and they believed in Him. Emphasize that everyone can tell others what God has done in his or her life. Jesus calls us to build relationships with others and tell them the good news of the gospel.*

(Option: Choose a kid to read 1 John 4:13-15.)

What are some ways you can show love to others? How can you remember to put others first? *Allow kids to share their ideas for practically serving others. Suggest kids paint one fingernail a bright color, wear their watch upside-down, apply a sticker to a place they'll see frequently (such as the toe of a shoe). When kids see the paint, watch, or sticker, they can remember to live with an others-first attitude.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 4:11.)

Activity choice (10 minutes)

Option 1: Picture prayers

Display a map of the United States. Distribute sticky notes and crayons. Invite kids to think of ways they can pray for Christians at Walk Church and other Christians who are sharing the gospel in Nevada.

Ask kids to write their prayer request on the sticky note or draw a picture representing that request. For example, a kid might draw a Bible to represent prayers that more people will learn about the Bible.

Allow each kid to tape a piece of yarn from your state to Nevada. Then add the sticky note. Take time to pray for missionaries, asking volunteers to pray aloud.

Say • Praying is a very important and powerful way that we support missionaries and churches around the world.

That's why people ask us to please pray for them. They know that our prayers matter!

Option 2: Bottle flip review game

Form two teams of kids. Invite players to take turns flipping a bottle of water, trying to land it upside down on its lid or upright on its bottom. When a player lands a flip, ask her team a review question. Correct answers earn 5 points for an upright bottle and 10 points for an upside-down bottle.

Where were Jesus and His disciples headed? (*Galilee, John 4:3*)

In what land did Jesus and His disciples stop at a well? (*Samaria, John 4:4-6*)

Who came to the well when Jesus was there? (*a Samaritan woman, John 4:7*)

What did Jesus first say to the woman? (*"Give me a drink," John 4:7*)

Why was the woman surprised that Jesus was talking to her? (*Jews did not associate with Samaritans, John 4:9*)

What did Jesus say He could give the woman? (*living water, John 4:10*)

What kind of life did Jesus say living water brings? (*eternal life, John 4:14*)

Who did the woman think Jesus was? (*a prophet, John 4:19*)

Who did Jesus tell the woman He is? (*the Messiah, John 4:26*)

Who heard the woman's testimony and believed? (*many Samaritans in her town, John 4:39*)

Say •Great job, everyone. When you leave here today, remember that Jesus offers something better than physical water; He gives us Himself. **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.** We can worship Him as Lord and Savior wherever we are.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?

What does the story teach me about myself?

Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?

Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?

How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for providing living water—the Holy Spirit.

Pray that God would use kids to boldly offer the truth of the gospel to those who do not know Jesus.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Testimony Template" on the activity page. Kids should answer the questions to outline their testimony. If a kid has not trusted in Jesus, encourage him to list thoughts or questions they have about following Him.