

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE®

ADULTS

Personal Study Guide

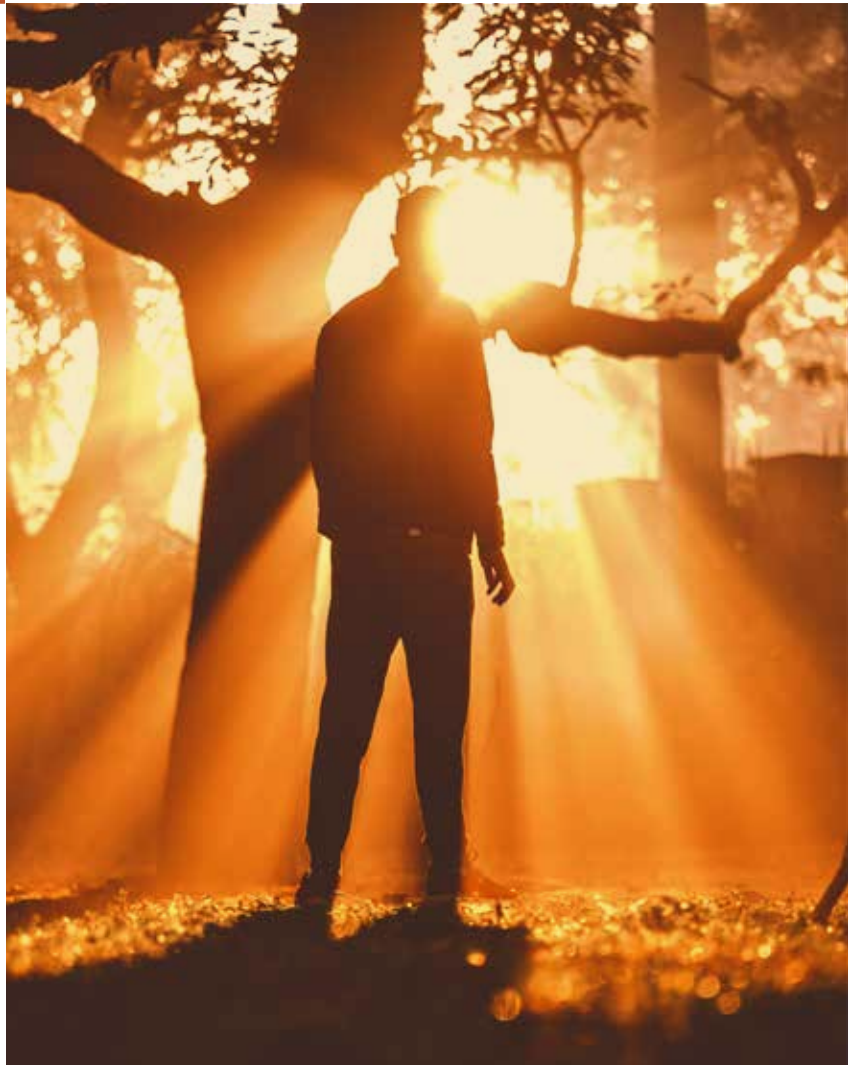
SPRING 2023 | CSB

STUDY 1:

*My Encounter
with Jesus*

STUDY 2:

*Dealing with
Temptation*



HOPE

Every April, major league baseball teams run onto baseball diamonds with hope. It's a new season, and this is the year we win the World Series.

All through the season, teams and fans begin to accept the reality that this will not be the year for them. Hope is gone. By October, only two of those teams will still hold on to that hope . . . but only one team will make it. Meanwhile, the other teams are thinking, "Just wait until next season!"

We all lose hope, but the biggest thing that kills hope is our sin. Sin—our disobedience and rebellion against God—leads to death. Unlike baseball, we don't have a "next season." This life is it. What hope do we have beyond this life?

Jesus Christ did the most amazing thing. He died on the cross to forgive our sins, and God raised Him from the dead. So how does that give us hope? Jesus removed our sin, conquered death, and offers us eternal life. We no longer need to fear death; rather, we can have sure hope of eternal life in spite of our past sin and failures.

To embrace this eternal life is to put your faith in Christ. Admit to God that you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you of all the wrong things you have done. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness and new life. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I'm sorry for all the wrong I've done and ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for forgiveness and for new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus's name, Amen."

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Be baptized as an expression of your faith. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in your faith.

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WELCOME

We all love a good story. I especially enjoy stories out of real life and hearing of different people's unique experiences. You likely have such a story. The Bible is certainly full of such stories, stories of people's encounters with God. In the first study, "My Encounter with Jesus," Chad Keck walks with us through encounters different men and women had with Jesus. Along the way, we're going to consider our own encounter with Jesus.

There's one encounter we want to avoid—sin—yet we can feel a continual bombardment of temptations to sin. In the second study, "Dealing with Temptation," Juan Sanchez shows us the principles and resources God has given us to stand strong in the face of temptation.

I would love to hear about your encounter with Jesus and what you gained from these studies. Stop by *Bible Studies for Life* on Facebook and leave a comment or message for us. Thanks for letting us be a part of your Bible study.

Lynn H. Pryor

Team Leader, *Bible Studies for Life*

 @lynnpryor



Introduction



MY ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

We are living in an epidemic of loneliness and isolation. A recent study by Harvard revealed that 36 percent of Americans experience a serious level of loneliness. That sense of loneliness and isolation is greater in some groups, like young adults and mothers with small children. Relationships and connection matter. We need those encounters in order to thrive.

Throughout this study we are going to see what happens when people encounter Jesus in their moment of need. He reached out to a woman alone at a well, healed a man born blind, showed compassion to a woman caught in sin, and willingly died on a cross and was raised from the dead to meet our greatest need. Jesus was always meeting and transforming people just when they needed Him most.

If you have ever needed Jesus to meet you, then this study is for you. If you have ever needed your life transformed, then there is a message for you in these texts. However, be prepared. Jesus often asked those He encountered difficult questions. He often caused them to reflect and think about their lives, their sin, and their future. He was even known to ask them to do difficult things, but this is how transformation works.

Transformation happens as we encounter Jesus.

CHAD KECK

Chad serves as Pastor of First Baptist Church Kettering in Dayton, Ohio. His wife, Candace, is a teacher and together they have four children. Chad also teaches courses at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Cedarville University.

How “My Encounter with Jesus” supports the Discipleship Plan (see page 129):

Share Christ. We have the responsibility and privilege to tell others about Christ. As we see how others were changed by their encounter with Jesus, we discover how we can tell others about our own life-changing encounter with Him.

My Encounter with Jesus

Session 1	Jesus Met My Greatest Need John 4:7-18,25-26
Session 2	Jesus Restored My Life John 5:2-11,19-21
Session 3	Jesus Gave Me Grace and Forgiveness John 8:2-11
Session 4	Jesus Opened My Eyes to the Truth John 9:1-7,32-33,35-38
Session 5	Jesus Died for Me John 19:16-19,28-30,38-42
Session 6	Jesus Rose Again to Give Me Life John 20:1-2,11-18

1

Jesus Met My Greatest Need



QUESTION 1:

What's the thirstiest you've ever been?

THE POINT

Only Jesus can truly
satisfy my thirst.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

It's not good to be so thirsty
your body hurts.

Several years ago, I was training for a marathon. No one ever accidentally finishes a marathon, because running one requires training and discipline. One morning I set out to complete a 16-mile run. As I began, the temperature was about 50 degrees, but it quickly rose into the 80s. It was at that point I realized I had not brought enough water. Being a determined person (my wife would say “stubborn”), I pressed on. It didn't take long in the heat for me to become thirsty—very thirsty. I became so

thirsty that my kidneys hurt. This was a very dangerous situation, and I'm grateful I made it back to my car, rehydrated, and recovered.

Our thirst tells us when we need water, but our lives tell us how much more we need eternal living water. This water isn't found in a bottle or a fountain. Jesus encountered a Samaritan woman who discovered that it is found only when we meet the One who knows us better than we know ourselves.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

JOHN 4:7-14

⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. “Give me a drink,” Jesus said to her, ⁸ because his disciples had gone into town to buy food. ⁹ “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” she asked him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered, “If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would ask him, and he would give you living water.” ¹¹ “Sir,” said the woman, “you don’t even have a bucket, and the well is deep. So where do you get this ‘living water’?” ¹² You aren’t greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock.” ¹³ Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life.”

“A woman of Samaria.” That is how this passage invites us in. We don’t know her name, but we do know where she was from—and where she is from tells us a lot about her. Knowing she is a Samaritan woman gives us the context for the conversation we are about to witness.

Jesus was always eager to engage people no matter their history or their circumstances. But the Samaritan woman didn’t know that when she first arrived at the well; she may have been a bit on edge about Jesus’s presence.

We don’t know exactly why this woman came to the well at noon (v. 6), but it’s most likely because she was seen as an outcast, even

among her own people. If that was the case, she had likely come at mid-day to be alone and avoid the looks or comments from the women who would come in the morning hours to get water. We’ll see later in the passage that she had some issues in her personal life that were likely the source of this rejection.

QUESTION 2:

What catches your attention from the start of this conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well?

Instead of being able to privately draw water, the woman was greeted with a request from a Jewish man. Nothing about this experience was making much sense to her. “ ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ she asked him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans” (v. 9).

One of the things Jesus was so good at was engaging in everyday conversations that were segues to eternal conversations. This conversation was no different. As they began to discuss something as simple as His human need for water, Jesus shifted the conversation to her eternal need for redemption. She thought they were talking about His need, but they were talking about her need!

The Samaritan woman was confused at first. She didn’t understand how this man was going to give her water that would cause her to never thirst again. If Jesus was able to provide this water to her without anything to draw with, then He must know about another source of water, one that was much easier

to access. Her next question revealed her thinking on this: “You aren’t greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock” (v. 12). To her, Jesus’s statement implied He was claiming to be greater than the patriarch Jacob.

It’s at this point the conversation turned. In just one sentence Jesus shifted from a discussion about the physical to one about the eternal. He is greater than Jacob, not because He knows of another water source, but because He is the Source. He identified for her the solution to a problem she didn’t know she had.

QUESTION 3:

What are some cultural bridges you’ve seen someone use effectively to start spiritual conversations?

JOHN 4:15-18

¹⁵ “Sir,” the woman said to him, “give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and come here to draw water.” ¹⁶ “Go call your husband,” he told her, “and come back here.” ¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” she answered. “You have correctly said, ‘I don’t have a husband,’” Jesus said. ¹⁸ “For you’ve had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”



The woman may have thought she had found a secret source of water that would allow her to avoid the shame of coming to this well alone. She had found an escape from her embarrassment and from having to face the reality of her public sin. Then it hit. Jesus didn't point out the location of a running stream. He didn't show her a better way to draw water from the well. Instead, Jesus—this stranger—identified her sin, a sin she would prefer not to talk about. Jesus told her to go get her husband and bring him to the well.

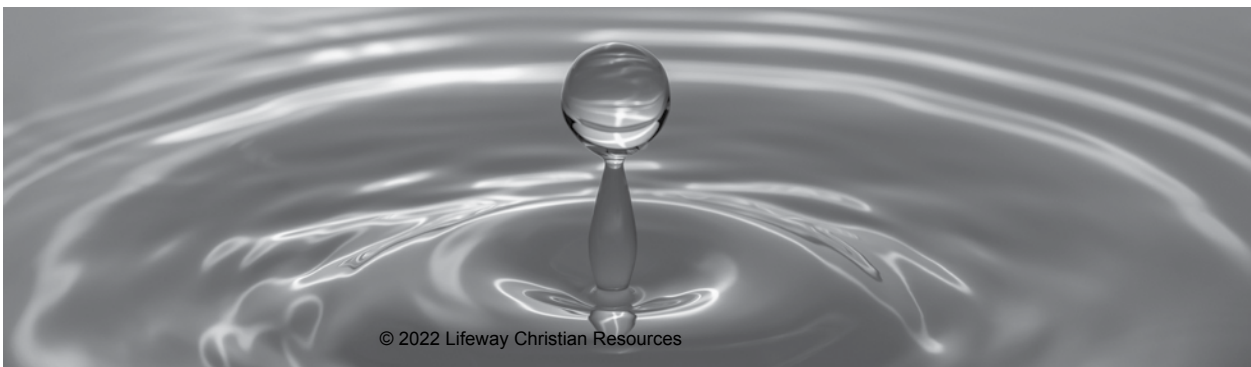
Most of us, when confronted with something shameful, hide, deflect, or shy away from the truth. We come by this behavior honestly because this is the way Adam and Eve handled their confrontation with God in the

garden of Eden after they had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:8). The Samaritan woman responded in the same way. She thought she could avoid the issue by admitting she had no husband, but she failed to realize whom she was speaking with. This man just looked into her life and spoke a truth about her that, as a stranger, He shouldn't have known.

There's nothing about us that Jesus doesn't know. He created us and, therefore, He knows us. So often we fool ourselves into thinking that we can hide our sin. We believe that, if we don't get caught and exposed publicly, then no one really knows. The reality is that God always knows. Nothing catches Him by surprise. When Jesus initiated the conversation with the woman, He already knew her situation, her marital status, and her history. Knowing all this didn't prevent Him from meeting with her at the well. In fact, it may be the very reason Jesus chose to travel through Samaria. It was certainly no accident that Jesus met this lady, on this day, at this time, and under these circumstances. Jesus does this with each person He encounters; He meets them right where they are.

QUESTION 4:

What are some obstacles to acknowledging our sin?



JOHN 4:25-26

²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁶ Jesus told her, “I, the one speaking to you, am he.”

The Samaritan woman may not have known much about what it took to make a marriage work, and she may not have known a lot about the nature of worship (John 4:19-24), but she did know the Messiah would be coming. She didn't know everything, but she knew the Messiah would. What she heard next would change her life, and eternity, forever. “Jesus told her, ‘I, the one speaking to you, am he.’ ” The man that had asked her to get Him a drink was the very one she had been waiting for. He was the one who knew her sin and shame and still took the time to engage with her anyway. He was the One who would love her unconditionally. He was the one who, just a few short years later, would die a criminal's death on the cross and be raised from the dead. The walk in the middle of the day that led her to the well didn't turn out at all like she suspected. God is so good at meeting us where we are and surprising us with His grace.

Following a Sunday morning service, an eighty-year-old church member introduced me to a young lady in her twenties. They were neighbors and the senior adult woman had invited her to be her guest that morning.

I was thrilled, but a bit surprised. What did this eighty-year-old lady have in common with this twenty-year-old? My curiosity got the better of me, so I asked. The older woman had been bitten by the younger woman's dog, but instead of getting mad at her and reporting it, the senior adult invited her to church.

Something amazing happened. The young lady heard the gospel, felt convicted of her sin, repented, and trusted Jesus as her Savior. Attending church and having her life completely transformed by Jesus wasn't on her agenda the day her dog got loose and bit her neighbor, but it was on God's agenda.

The woman at the well wasn't going to find rest in another husband nor in water from a stream. She needed something supernatural as we all do. And that's exactly what she found when Jesus met her at a well in the middle of the day.

QUESTION 5:

How do we know we can trust Jesus?

FULLY KNOWN

How does it make you feel to be completely known by Jesus? Place a mark on the scale below. Then offer a prayer of thanks to God for knowing and loving you.

Scared - - - - - **Ambivalent** - - - - - **Comforted**

Being known by Jesus can be scary because He knows the worst about you. But Jesus already knew that when He loved you to the point of dying on the cross for you. We have nothing to hide, and we are still completely loved. That is truly comforting.

My Prayer:

*“God whispers to us in our pleasures,
speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain:
it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”*

C. S. LEWIS

LIVE IT OUT

Only Jesus can truly satisfy my thirst. Choose one of the following applications:

- ▶ **Remember.** When did Christ come into your life? Think about that moment. Thank Jesus for saving you. If you cannot identify that moment or you have not yet begun a relationship with Christ, reach out to your pastor or another believer and ask them to help you. The inside cover of this book can tell you more.
- ▶ **Connect.** Who around you may feel isolated like the woman at the well? Take a moment this week and write a card, make a call, or send a text. Let that person know you love them and care about them. Jesus saw the woman and her need. Let someone know that you see them.
- ▶ **Fast.** If you are medically able, skip a meal or two one day this week. Jesus moved the woman from thinking about a physical need to a spiritual need. Fasting can help us prioritize the need for spiritual food more than physical food.

All of us know what it's like to be thirsty. Some of us know what it's like to be really thirsty. That's true of our spiritual thirst also. Thankfully, Jesus is our Living Water, the One who has come to make sure we never thirst again!