

THIS IS JESUS

UNIT ONE: THE MESSIAH NAMED JESUS PART 2: HE IS

Lesson 2: He Is The Living Water

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: That Jesus offers Himself as the Living Water to all of us, in order to quench our spiritual thirst for God.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To seek after the Living Water of Jesus, in the same way that the Samaritan Woman did.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: John 4:1-42

KEY TAKEAWAY: Jesus is the Living Water that is essential to quenching our spiritual thirst.

OVERVIEW:

Just like our bodies thirst for water, our souls thirst for God. In the narrative of the Woman at the Well, Jesus offers Himself as the Living Water. Although the water she draws from the well will leave her thirsting again, receiving the Living Water will satisfy her soul, and she will not thirst again. Although it would have been strange for a Jewish rabi to interact with a Samaritan Woman, Jesus displays God's love for all people (even those that the religious leaders of the day had ostracized).

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *This Is Jesus* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* give you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what's happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible Study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context," we mean, at the very least, helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

John

- *Author:* The Gospel of John was written by John the Apostle, son of Zebedee. A fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus, John also penned the Book of Revelation, as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- *Time frame:* The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 A.D. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- *Purpose:* John's stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

THE SETTING

Samaritans and Jews had a history. The northern kingdom was sent into exile in 729 B.C. Though God warned them not to, some of the Israelites intermarried with foreigners. The Samaritans were the result. Conflict inevitably arose, and the Samaritans built their own place of worship on Mt. Gerizim. They rejected all the books in the Old Testament except for their own version of the Old Testament. This Samaritan-Jewish animosity had been around for centuries. This passage from John's Gospel would have been astounding to Jews. It is a clear indication that God's love and salvation would not be reserved for the Jews alone.

THE MAIN POINT

Some people make a mistake by saying, "My life is a mess right now. I'll worship God when I clean it up." In reality, we cannot clean ourselves up; only Jesus can change us. Jesus did not tell the woman to clean up her life before she could experience His living water. He met the woman at her personal point of need and understanding. Some people may think others are unworthy of God's grace because of their status or past sins. None of those issues prevented Jesus from sharing the truth with the woman. No one is excluded from His offer of living water.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: an introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible Study section called *The Main Event*; and an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

THE LEAD IN

- *Goal:* To introduce the idea of a stranger (and the differences between all of the people Jesus came to save).
- *Set-Up:* None needed.

FIRST, welcome students and explain that your lesson will begin with a little word definition. **Say something like:**

- **There are a lot of sayings about strangers out there, from “Stranger Danger” to “Strangers are just friends we haven’t met yet.”**

THEN, ask students:

- **How would you define a stranger?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What makes a stranger... strange?**
 - *Answers will vary.* Most of the time, it is simply that they are different and unfamiliar.

FINALLY, say something like:

- **Strange or “stranger” implies differences. Some common differences are the way we dress, the color of our skin, the accent in our voices, and so on. In fact, if you were to see Jesus in the hallway at your school, dressed in His humble robes and speaking in first-century Arabic, you would probably find Him very strange! And it might even stop you from speaking with Him. Today, we are going to read about an encounter with this “strange man” and a Samaritan Woman who would have been equally as strange to Jesus’ disciples.**

Make sure there are no questions, and then transition to The Main Event.

THE MAIN EVENT

- *Goal:* To examine Jesus’ encounter with the Woman at the Well, and understand what He is truly offering her, and us.
- *Set-Up:* Make sure students have a Bible or Bible App.

FIRST, instruct students to turn to John 4. Using the Bible Background, you may choose to give students a brief introduction to the text before reading the first portion.

THEN, read or have a student read John 4:1-6. **Say something like:**

- **These six verses give us quite a bit of context for where Jesus is and where He is going. It was common for Jews to avoid going through Samaria because they found the Samaritans incredibly strange. That’s putting it nicely. Avoiding people because they are different than you is often a sign of fear in the best case, and hate in the worst. But Jesus, having neither fear nor hate, did not go out of His way to avoid Samaria.**

NEXT, read or have a student read John 4:7-8. **Ask something like:**

- **Now wait just a minute... Jesus not only went through the place that Jews never really went, but He started interacting with the people there! Imagine you go to school this week and find out your school is hosting a**

student from Peru. This is the first person that you and all of your classmates have met from Peru. And as they walk in, they make a beeline to you. With zero hesitation, they say, “Hey! Can I sit with you at lunch?” How do you feel? How do you react?

- o *Answers will vary.* Help students understand how the attention from Jesus must have felt for the Samaritan Woman.

THEN, read or have a student read John 4:9-10. **Ask students:**

- **Does the woman’s response to Jesus match what you would expect?**
 - o *Answers will vary.*
- **What about Jesus’ response? What would you think if a stranger said something like this to you?**
 - o *Answers will vary.*

Say something like:

- **This would have been a very strange thing to experience. Most people didn’t turn a casual encounter at the well into a deep spiritual truth. Let’s find out what happened next.**

NEXT, read John 4:11-15. **Say something like:**

- **This young woman brings up a great point about the well. Jacob, the builder of the well, is a very central figure in the Old Testament. For Jesus to claim, “Sure, this well will give you some water, but I’ve got something better,” was a big claim! We read that she actually questions Him, “So... you are saying you are better than Jacob? Like, THE Jacob?” Surely this strange man was on to something if he wasn’t scared to talk to her like the other Jews. At that time, simply drinking water that a Samaritan had drawn could be enough to be deemed unclean by Jewish laws. So maybe He did have this magic water!**

THEN, explain briefly that it’s unclear how much the woman understood. She may have been stuck on what Jesus could physically offer her rather than looking deeper into her spiritual need. She may also have been someone who was easily interested in new ideas, or the ‘ask questions later’ type. We don’t know for sure. But Jesus knew exactly how to help this woman understand what He truly offered her. Read or have a student read John 4:16-26. **Ask:**

- **By a show of hands, how many of you would like to get married one day when you meet the right person?**
 - o *Students will raise (or not raise) their hands in answer.*

Say something like:

- **Getting married is a really special thing. And most of us who want to get married hope that it’s a one-time event. You want to marry someone special and live your happily ever after. But it appears that our friend at the well didn’t have such luck. This woman probably didn’t advertise that she had such poor luck with her previous husbands. It could have been that they died, and she was heartbroken. She could have been infertile and sent packing when she couldn’t provide an heir. Regardless, Jesus wanted to show her that He knew her deepest pain and regrets. Which is something that no random stranger could have known!**

Ask:

- **How did the woman respond when Jesus revealed He knew about her multiple marriages?**
 - o *Answer:* She declared that He was a prophet. She then asked Him about a spot of worship.
- **Why do you think the woman was prompted to ask about worship?**

- o *Answers will vary.*

Briefly explain that the woman may have felt so seen by God through the words of Jesus that her thoughts started centering on worship. Her thoughts might have been something like, “God sees me! He cares for me! He even sent this stranger to tell me of a special water that satisfies my thirst forever.” However, Jesus surprises her further by revealing that He is not just sent by God, but that He is God in the flesh. **Say something like:**

- **Jesus is the Living Water that He was offering the woman at the well. All of us have a deep need for God and experience the pain of being separated from Him. The woman decided to go into her town and share the news of Jesus. It would appear she had a lot of friends willing to listen to her, because verse 30 tells us that a crowd decided to walk out and meet Jesus. Let’s read what happens next.**

FINALLY, read or have a student read John 4:39-42. **Say something like:**

- **Sometimes, we are given the opportunity to introduce two of our friends from different areas of our lives. For example, you might introduce your friend from basketball camp to your best friend who lives a few doors down. And after a while, the two of them become genuine friends. In fact, they may hang out together without you sometimes! In a way, this is what we see happening with the Samaritan Woman. She encounters Jesus, and because she tells others about Him, they also seek Him out and come to believe He is indeed the Savior of the world! Jesus didn’t just offer Himself to one person or a couple of special people. He offered Himself to all of us, so that we may drink the Living Water and have our thirst for God satisfied in Him!**

Allow for questions, and then transition into The Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- *Goal:* To help students identify their own thirst for God and point out the common theme of spiritual thirst in Scripture.
- *Set-Up:* Make sure students have a Bible or Bible App.

FIRST, explain to students that most of today’s lesson deals with thirst. Particularly, the notion that Jesus is the only answer to our spiritual thirst. **Say something like:**

- **Although the Woman at the Well is a prominent way that Jesus talks about being the Water of Life, this theme of thirsting for God shows up in many other parts of Scripture.**

THEN, read or have a student read the following verses: Matthew 5:6, Psalm 63:1, Psalm 42:1-2, and Psalm 143:5-6. Once they have been read, **ask students:**

- **What do these verses have in common?**
 - o *Answer:* Each verse talks about thirst.
- **Thirst for what, or Who, exactly?**
 - o *Answer:* God

NEXT, explain that thirsting for God is more of a spiritual thirst. Someone who thirsts for God might seek out more meaningful quiet times, commit to displaying righteousness in their life, or spend more time intentionally worshipping God. **Say something like:**

- **Because God created us, we all have an innate thirst for Him. That spiritual thirst will only be quenched when we enter into a relationship with Him. But we will never stop thirsting for a deeper knowledge of Him. Think of it like finding a really good “limited edition” soda that you like. Maybe you tried a sip one day out**

of curiosity, and next thing you know, you have bought up all the stock from your local grocery store. You can't get enough!

THEN, challenge students to reflect on their own thirst for God. **Ask:**

- **If you were to answer honestly, would you say that you truly thirst for God?**
 - *Answers will vary, or this could be a moment of quiet reflection.*

FINALLY, explain that we all have a thirst for God. The difference is in whether or not we identify that deep spiritual thirst with a need for God, or try to fill it with something else. Challenge students to think about some of the ways they might seek to fill their spiritual thirst with things or people other than God.

Allow Time For Any Closing Thoughts Or Questions From Your Students. Before Leaving, Close With A Prayer.

- Don't forget to remind students about their devotions this week. If you're posting them on Social Media or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.