

Session 1



“Jesus Over My Searching

(The Woman at the Well)

Purpose: To recognize how Jesus satisfies our needs and desires.

Icebreaker: What’s your go-to local spot and what’s your standard order there?

Leader Say It: Whether it's a favorite coffee shop, a drive-thru, or a spot in the park, we all have routines around where we go to refuel. Today we're looking at a woman who went to her usual local spot for daily water, only to have an encounter that completely changed her routine.

Read: John 4:1-8

Observe: Explain the passage in your own words. What conflicts, questions, or goals show up in the passage? Are there any connections to other parts of Scripture?

Leader Notes: Encourage the group to observe the text by looking for patterns, points of emphasis (repetition is a big one, key words), tension (between people or concepts), perspectives, and connections (to life, to other parts of Scripture, etc.). You don't need to walk through this every time you observe the text, but it's good to bring it up often so it becomes familiar.

Discuss:

Jesus left Israel and traveled through Samaria. He met the woman at the well in a foreign (and potentially unwelcoming) land. She met Jesus at the well where she gets her daily water. To her, this location might have been completely mundane, or even uncomfortable. It's possible it had shame associated with it (that would explain why she's getting water alone, at noon, instead of in the morning with the other women).

- In the past, how has God met you in the mundane (the normal, the routine, etc.)?

Read: John 4:9-15

Observe: What objections does the woman raise when Jesus offers her living water?

Discuss:

When the woman finally asks Jesus for living water she says, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

- How is this mentality reflected in the way we usually approach Jesus?
- What misconceptions have you had to work through in your own life regarding what you thought Jesus was going to give you vs what he actually gave you?

Read: John 4:16-20

Observe: How does the conversation shift in this section? Do you think the woman is changing the topic as a diversion from her sinful lifestyle, or do you think she’s asking genuine questions?

Discuss:

One commentary notes a parallel between the water and the woman’s husbands. Just as her daily water can’t permanently satisfy her thirst, neither has she been satisfied in her pursuit of relationships.

- What are some ways you find yourself seeking satisfaction in the things of the world?

- It's often noted that the woman is getting water in the middle of the day, alone, instead of in the morning when the other women would typically get their water. This is possibly because of her own shame or because of a poor reputation as a result of her many relationships.
- Has isolation (self-inflicted or otherwise) played a role in your faith journey? If so, how?

Read: John 4:21-26

Observe: As the discussion has turned from physical needs to spiritual realities, how has Jesus guided the woman on a path of discovery?

Discuss:

- When you stepped over the line of faith (if you have), did you have many questions you wanted answered before doing so? If yes, what were they? How were they answered?
- If you haven't stepped over the line of faith, what unanswered questions are holding you back?

Read: John 27-30

Discuss:

Most of us have “safe” sins that we’re okay talking about (pride, gossip, anxiety, etc.) and “shameful” sins that we try to hide, or hide from, (addiction, moral failures, destructive habits, etc.).

- If the whole world suddenly knew about your “shameful” sins, how do you think they would treat you? Base your answer on how the world actually is, not how you’d like it to be.
- When’s the last time you confessed your “shameful” sins to someone? How did you feel after?

Read: John 4:31-38

Observe: Explore the connections in this passage between drinking and eating, in particular the tension between the meeting of physical vs spiritual needs.

Read: John 4:39-42

Observe: The woman’s story results in her town’s revival. It likely wasn’t comfortable, as the town knew her history, but her story had incredible power.

Discuss:

- What would it take for you to share your story with the people most likely to judge you for it?

Application Suggestions:

Leader notes: Ask everyone to pick a practice for this week, and explain that you will ask them about it next week

The Daily Pause. Attach a 1-minute prayer to a daily routine (like coffee or driving to work): "Jesus, satisfy my heart today so I don't chase things that won't last."

The "Well" Audit. Write down 2–3 things you turn to for comfort when stressed (e.g., social media, shopping, overworking). Pray over the list, asking God to replace those habits with His peace.

Share a Snapshot. Text or tell a trusted friend one thing God is teaching you in this study.