

# WATER TO LIVING WATER

CORE PASSAGE: JOHN 4:7-11,13-15,19-23,25-26

## CONTEXT

In John 3, Jesus revealed to Nicodemus that belief in Jesus's death to pay for sins was required to enter the kingdom of God. In John 4, Jesus revealed to a non-Jewish woman with a sinful past that religious tribalism had no place in His mission to redeem sinners. Though Jews and Samaritans generally steered clear of one another, Jesus spoke with a Samaritan woman who needed the eternal satisfaction only He could bring.

## KEY CONCEPT

**Jesus came to give eternal life to all who believe in and worship Him.**

As you examine John 4:7-11,13-15,19-23,25-26:

- Identify how Jesus crossed societal boundaries to share the gift of eternal life.
- Consider Jesus's assertion that true worship involves worshiping in Spirit and truth.



## TIMELINE

Jesus Performs His First  
Miracle at the Wedding in  
Cana (John 2:1-11)

Nicodemus Visits Jesus at Night  
(John 3:1-21)

**SESSION STUDY: Jesus Speaks with a  
Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-42)**

Jesus Cleanses the Temple  
(John 2:13-22)

John the Baptist Scales Back  
His Ministry (John 3:22-36)

Jesus Performs His Second  
Miracle in Cana (John 4:46-54)

### Daily Readings

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 1:</b> John 4:1-10  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 4:</b> John 4:27-38 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 2:</b> John 4:11-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 5:</b> John 4:39-42 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 3:</b> John 4:19-26 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 6:</b> Psalm 42     |



Scan this QR code to access  
this session's Scripture passages.

**JESUS GIVES US LIVING WATER** (JOHN 4:7-11,13-15).

**Highlight each reference to drinking or water. Note whether each reference seems to be literal or figurative.**

**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’? . . . **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.” **15** “Sir,” the woman said to him, “give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and come here to draw water.”

Jesus and His disciples paused their journey to rest in a Samaritan village called Sychar (vv. 3-5). Jesus sat by a well “about noon” (v. 6), when a woman approached to draw water. This was unusual because women generally drew water at the beginning or end of the day when it was cooler, and they generally drew water in groups. With the disciples on an errand to buy food (v. 8), Jesus asked the woman for a drink.

The woman felt surprised Jesus would even talk with her. The disdain between Jews and Samaritans ran deep, and Jewish animosity toward Samaritan women could be particularly acute. Her surprise increased when Jesus offered her “living water” (v. 10), a phrase that could signify either fresh, running water from a spring or refreshing salvation from God (see Isa. 55:1-2; Jer. 2:13; Zech. 14:8). The woman’s initial response revealed she was thinking only of literal water. But Jesus was sharing with her that He gives the gift of eternal life.

**LEADER NOTE:** The mutual dislike between Jews and Samaritans had both ethnic and religious roots. Samaritans descended from Israelites in the Northern Kingdom of Israel and foreigners brought into the land by the Assyrians after they conquered Israel in 722 BC. Religiously, Samaritans accepted only their version of the first five books of the Old Testament and adopted different worship practices than the Jews. This led Jews to regard Samaritans as tainted by impurity on multiple levels.

**Key Concept:** Jesus came to give eternal life to all who believe in and worship Him.

With what groups of people do you feel reluctant to share the gospel? Why?

Notes

#### CHURCH CONNECTION

Jesus crossed barriers to share the truth of Himself and the gospel. As believers today, we are to do the same, taking the gospel of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

By speaking of recurring thirst, Jesus noted that nothing in this world can satisfy the human soul. The author of Ecclesiastes captured this sentiment vividly when he wrote: “‘Absolute futility,’ says the Teacher. ‘Absolute futility. Everything is futile’” (Eccl. 1:2). True and abiding satisfaction comes only from the salvation Jesus offers. The psalmist put it like this: “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so I long for you, God” (Ps. 42:1).

Jesus satisfies the thirst in our souls not by removing it. Rather, He places a self-replenishing spring of spiritual refreshment inside each person who trusts Him as Lord and Savior. That spring is the Holy Spirit. In John’s Gospel, the gift of living water is understood to be the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus would pronounce before a crowd in Jerusalem, “The one who believes in me . . . will have streams of living water flow from deep within him” (John 7:38). John added that “he said this about the Spirit” (v. 39).

**LEADER NOTE:** Believers draw ongoing satisfaction from the Holy Spirit through spiritual disciplines, practices that build our connection with God. Reading the Scriptures gives us strength and nourishment (Ps. 1:1-2). Spending time with Jesus in prayer gives us energy to obey (John 15:5). Worshiping with other believers in a local church encourages us to resist sin (Heb. 10:24-25). Spiritual disciplines are like the straw through which we drink the living water of the Holy Spirit. Paul expressed the same notion with a different metaphor when he commanded us to “be filled by the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit’s spiritual refreshing in your life?

### JESUS CLARIFIED WHAT WORSHIP IS AND THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH (JOHN 4:19-23,25-26).

**Circle each statement Jesus made about worship.**

**19** “Sir,” the woman replied, “I see that you are a prophet. **20** Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.” **21** Jesus told her, “Believe me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. **22** You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. **23** But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. . . . **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.”

Realizing Jesus was, at the very least, a prophet with some level of inspiration from God, the woman brought up a point of religious dispute between Jews and Samaritans. Jews recognized Jerusalem as the proper site of temple worship in keeping with God’s instructions to Moses, David, and Solomon. Samaritans, who only recognized their version of Genesis through Deuteronomy as Scripture, believed Mount Gerizim in Samaria was the proper site of worship. The woman wanted to know which viewpoint was correct.

Soon the answer would be neither, Jesus said, though He declared the Jews were correct about old covenant worship (v. 22). With Jesus’s coming, true worship was elevated beyond the visible and temporal realms. True worship now involves worshiping in Spirit and truth (v. 23). The only people able to render true worship are those given new spiritual life by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. These believers worship Jesus, the truth incarnate (14:6). God desires His people to worship in this way.

**LEADER NOTE:** Why did true worship transition from temple rituals to worshiping Jesus from any location? The Old Testament temple foreshadowed a reality that was fulfilled by Jesus. Under the Mosaic covenant, God manifested His presence to His people in the tabernacle and later the temple. When Jesus came, He “dwelt among us” (1:14). The Greek word for “dwelt” literally means “tabernacled.” Through Jesus, God manifests His presence most fully to humans. If we want to know God, we need only come to Jesus. Worship in an earthly temple pales in comparison to the divine presence we experience when we trust Jesus.

**Key Concept:** Jesus came to give eternal life to all who believe in and worship Him.

Notes

**How does the health of our personal relationship with Jesus impact our ability to worship in Spirit and truth?**

The woman realized Jesus's statements related to the coming Messiah, the One promised in the Old Testament who would remedy sin's curse. Samaritans expected the Messiah to be a teacher. He would be the prophet like Moses foretold in Deuteronomy who would "tell them everything" (Deut. 18:18). Because the Messiah was the great explainer, it was natural for the woman to anticipate he would explain the mysteries Jesus had presented.

Jesus responded by revealing Himself as the Messiah to the Samaritan woman. The phrase translated "I . . . am he" entails only two words in Greek translated "I am," the same two words used repeatedly by Jesus in John's Gospel to present Himself as the fulfillment of messianic expectations. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (6:35), "I am the gate" (10:7), and "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25). By making an "I am" statement to the Samaritan woman, Jesus revealed Himself as the fulfillment of the deepest hopes of Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles.

**LEADER NOTE:** Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah to the Samaritan woman but told many others to keep silent about His identity. After Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah, "he gave the disciples orders to tell no one" (Matt. 16:20). Similarly, Jesus told some people He healed to keep quiet about His identity (cf. Mark 1:44). Why the difference between those episodes and this one? The commands to keep silent most often occurred in Jewish territories, where those with misguided messianic expectations might try to make Jesus a political or military king. That could have incited the Romans against Him before the appointed hour of His crucifixion. There was no such danger among non-Jews. With the Samaritan woman, Jesus could announce His identity freely.

**How can you take the gospel to people who do not realize Jesus is the Messiah?**

**THEOLOGY CONNECTION**

**EVANGELISM:** It is the duty and privilege of every Christian and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations. Missionary effort on the part of all is a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations.

Notes

| WORK OF THE SPIRIT  |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| OLD TESTAMENT   | PSALMS  | NEW TESTAMENT   |
| <p>1. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>2. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>3. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> | <p>1. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>2. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>3. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> | <p>1. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>2. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> <p>3. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the world, who is active in the hearts of men and women, and who is the source of all spiritual life and power.</p> |

ARRIVAL

**ENGAGE:** As people arrive, make a tally as you ask: “What is your favorite beverage to serve guests on a hot summer day? What do you want to drink after your stomach has settled from being nauseated for several hours? What do you crave when you are on the treadmill, running a marathon, or hiking for hours at a time?”

**TRANSITION:** We need fluids to keep us going, but our bodies naturally seem to thirst for the fluids that will be most satisfying and provide what we need. Likewise, our souls long for that which will quench our spiritual thirst, and there is only one option—the Holy Spirit (*recall Pack Item 14: Work of the Spirit*).

CONTEXT

**SAY:** Today’s story took place in Sychar, a town in Samaria, a region known in biblical times for the enmity that existed between Samaritans and Jews. Because of this, Jews often avoided travel through Samaria. Jesus, however, was not bound by such fleshly constraints and not only traveled through the area but stopped at Jacob’s well for refreshment. When Jesus arrived in Sychar at the well, the verses preceding our passage note that He was “worn out” and that the time was “about noon” (v. 6), a point in the day when most people did not usually come to the well.

RECAP

**SUMMARIZE:** As you go through the highlights of the passage, point out that the conversation that took place between Jesus and the Samaritan woman is an example of how to move from shallow small talk to the deep waters of communicating spiritual truths.

**IDENTIFY:** Encourage the group to pinpoint the move Jesus made that initiated the conversation and drew the woman into discussion before skillfully leading her into deeper spiritual waters.

**TRANSITION:** Our passage today represents a master class by Jesus in how to move a chance meeting into a divine encounter to fulfill His mission—to seek and to save those who are lost.



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**Key Concept:** Jesus came to give eternal life to all who believe in and worship Him.

### GROUP ACTIVITY

Notes

**BOXES:** Guide the group to page 126 of their Personal Study Guide (PSG) to the activity “Talk Around the Water Cooler.” Replicate the boxes on a board.

**Talk Around the Water Cooler**  
Read John 4:7-26 and list how Jesus gave us an example to follow in having spiritual conversations.

The diagram consists of four empty rectangular boxes with rounded corners, each with a dark green header containing a tip number. The boxes are arranged in a 2x2 grid. Arrows indicate a flow: a horizontal arrow from TIP #1 to TIP #2, a diagonal arrow from TIP #1 to TIP #3, and a horizontal arrow from TIP #3 to TIP #4.

**SAY:** Jesus’s discussion with the Samaritan woman can teach us how to turn a water-cooler conversation into a meaningful interaction by the example of how He progressed the conversation.

**IDENTIFY:** Invite a volunteer to read John 4:7-9. First mention Jesus’s decision to cross cultural and ethnic barriers to talk to a woman and a Samaritan. Direct the group to identify the first tip we learn from Jesus and the Samaritan woman’s conversation. (*ask a question—Jesus asked for a drink; talk about something common—Jesus talked about natural water*) Encourage the group to write down their conclusions on their chart under Tip #1.

**IDENTIFY:** Invite another volunteer to read John 4:10-14. Call the group to identify the pivot Jesus made from physical water to spiritual water and to write down their findings under Tip #2. (*find the person’s real need—Jesus moved the conversation from natural water to living water; move from a physical need to a spiritual one*)

**DIG:** Invite a third volunteer to read John 4:15-18. Note that Jesus referred to her questionable history in verses not featured in today's passage, but His knowledge of her made her realize her sin. Instruct the group to identify an example to follow and record their conclusions on the chart under Tip #3. *(when the other person realizes their need, help them know Jesus satisfies all our needs)*

**IDENTIFY:** Invite a final volunteer to read John 4:19-26. Note how Jesus moved from identifying her need to pointing to Himself as Messiah. Encourage your group to write down what Jesus did next as Tip #4. *(Jesus related what the woman knew to be true to an understanding of who He is; in sharing truth, the next step would be helping to relate what someone knows to the truth of Jesus)*

**CONSIDER:** Guide the group to make some guesses on how long Jesus may have remained at the well to talk to the woman, how fast the conversation went from common to significant, and how life changing it was, not only for the Samaritan woman but for the people she also talked to about Jesus.

### DEBRIEF

**What might keep us from turning common conversations into gospel sharing opportunities?**

### SUMMARIZE

We can follow Jesus's example to make what may seem like a chance encounter into an opportunity to get to spiritual matters. In doing so, we are not only obedient to Christ's command to share the gospel, but we can help meet the deep spiritual need for living water for people who may not know they need it.

### HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Walk the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG (p. 127). If running short on time, specifically highlight the **Heart** section in this week's study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.



**HEAD:** The woman at the well learned that Jesus fulfilled the Bible's promises. That was a life-changing experience for her. It can be for us as well. Knowledge of Jesus lays a foundation for us to trust in Jesus. Think about where your knowledge of evidence of Jesus is lacking and how you can spend more time studying so you're able to answer others' questions.

**What are some ways you can study about Jesus to know Him more deeply?**



**HEART:** Jesus offered the Samaritan woman living water to satisfy her soul. That same refreshment is available to every follower of Jesus. The Holy Spirit lives inside each believer and gives sustaining power through prayer, Bible study, worship, confession of sin, and other spiritual disciplines.

**Key Concept:** Jesus came to give eternal life to all who believe in and worship Him.

Notes

**How might your life evidence spiritual dryness and thirst, and how can you address that thirst?**



**HANDS:** The people we encounter each week need to know about the salvation offered by Jesus. They experience confusion, brokenness, and the need for forgiveness. Think of a friend or family member with whom you could share about Jesus. Pray for that person and set up a time to meet for conversation. Tell them about the spiritual satisfaction Jesus's living water offers.

**How can you encourage other believers to share regularly the good news of Jesus Christ?**

### NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this week's session.

- Thinking about your own potential water-cooler conversations, prepare a request or question you may intentionally ask someone else to signal your willingness to delve into spiritual talk.
- Social media provides a unique platform for taking a conversation into spiritual depths. Ask yourself how you might use social media as a way of starting spiritual dialogues.
- Make a list of the people you typically avoid talking with about spiritual matters and prayerfully commit to crossing that barrier by asking God to help you identify a specific opportunity.

Invite volunteers to share prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 127 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

**CLOSE:** Pray through Psalm 42:1-2 with your group, addressing your desire for the Lord and how only He satisfies.

# WHY WE CAN TRUST THE RESURRECTION

By Bob Bunn



Within hours, myths surrounding the resurrection of Jesus began circulating on the first Easter morning. In his Gospel, Matthew explained that the religious leaders in Jerusalem made a deal with the Romans to cover up the empty tomb. As a result, the story of a stolen body gained traction among skeptics (Matt. 28:11-15).

## A MAJOR MYTH

More than two thousand years later, doubters still embrace this myth, even though no one had a good reason to steal the body of Jesus. Few Romans would have wanted to nurture a story about Jesus's resurrection. If anything, they would have tamped down any messianic fervor a resurrection story could ignite. Likewise, the Jewish leaders understood that Jesus's resurrection would threaten their authority and their own messianic interpretations.

Of course, the disciples were blamed for the stolen body, but even they didn't have a good reason for robbing Jesus's grave. In fact, they seemed more surprised than anyone by reports of an empty tomb, even though Jesus had foretold it on multiple occasions. Plus, they never would have risked their lives to overpower trained Roman soldiers.

## OTHER MYTHS

So, the "stolen body" theory really holds no water. In fact, none of the so-called "arguments" against the resurrection stand up to scrutiny. While trying to paint the Easter story as a myth, these "explanations" become myths in themselves:

**1. The Swoon Theory:** Jesus just passed out on the cross and revived in the cool air of the tomb. Of course, this completely ignores

the soldier who thrust his spear into Jesus's side to ensure He was dead. It also doesn't explain how a man who was recovering from torture and crucifixion managed to roll away the stone.

- 2. The Hypnosis Theory:** Everyone who saw Jesus was the victim of a mass hallucination, possibly a hypnotic suggestion planted by Jesus before His death. One would need to believe that hundreds of people would have fallen under the same spell across the course of six weeks. Then they'd have to explain how Saul of Tarsus saw and spoke to the risen Christ years after the Lord's return to heaven.
- 3. The Wrong Tomb Theory:** In their grief before the sun came up on Easter morning, the women simply visited the wrong tomb. But this idea has two major problems. First, John and Peter ran to the tomb after sunrise and found it exactly as the ladies described it. Second, the Romans could have pointed people to the correct tomb with Jesus's body still tucked away inside. This argument actually supports a resurrection.

## BETTER EVIDENCE

In contrast to nonsensical explanations, two very important realities provide solid arguments in favor of Jesus's resurrection. The first is the abundance of eyewitness accounts. Since Jewish law discounted the testimony of women, no group trying to perpetuate a hoax would claim women as primary witnesses. But Christianity affirms the women's witness because we know the resurrection is true.

None of the so-called “arguments” against the resurrection stand up to scrutiny. While trying to paint the Easter story as a myth, these “explanations” become myths in themselves.

Plus, as mentioned, the women were not the only witnesses. Hundreds of people encountered the empty tomb and the resurrected Christ. From Peter and John on Easter morning to the travelers on the road to Emmaus on Easter evening to the apostle Paul outside Damascus, biblical history offers a plethora of testimonies regarding the risen Savior.

But for many, the greatest evidence of the resurrected Savior is the transformation seen in the lives of the disciples. Almost overnight, this band of cowards hiding in a locked room became an army of bold witnesses in the temple courtyards. The more their enemies turned up the heat, the more determined they became to share the gospel with as many people as possible.

Honestly, it’s hard to imagine them enduring persecution—and ultimately sacrificing their lives—for a hoax. If the resurrection were some kind of scam, they would have come clean as soon as the suffering hit. Yet they remained faithful to the end.

### WHY IT MATTERS

The resurrection of Jesus is vital to us because it provides the backbone for our faith. In 1 Corinthians 15:12-19, the apostle Paul outlined a spiritual domino effect that topples everything we hold dear if the resurrection isn’t true. If resurrection is impossible, then Jesus wasn’t raised. If Jesus wasn’t raised, then the gospel is a fraud. If the gospel is a fraud, then our faith—and our eternal hope—is worthless.

If our faith is worthless, we are the most pitiful people on the face of the earth. We could be out doing whatever we wanted with no guilt or consequences instead of following the teachings of a

dead man. Nothing would really matter because Jesus isn’t really alive and will never really come back either to judge us or reward us.

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Our hope remains secure.  
And no amount  
of skepticism or  
philosophical theories  
can change that.

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But Paul put the brakes on the dominoes with one simple statement of faith: “As it is, Christ has been raised from the dead” (1 Cor. 15:20). As a result, we know that He is alive. Our faith is not in vain. Our hope remains secure. And no amount of skepticism or philosophical theories can change that. He is risen indeed!

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# THE DISCIPLINE OF HUMBLE FAITH

By Rachel Myrick



This side of the cross, in our daily Bible readings, we enjoy the blessing of reading God's promises in the Old Testament and seeing their fulfillment in Jesus in the New Testament. Yet the people who encountered Jesus did not have the benefit of seeing the whole picture. They experienced the wonder and the glory, but they reacted with humble faith. Many times they didn't know what God was doing but trusted their salvation to Him. Here are a few things we can learn from those who devoted their lives to God's plan in humble faith.

## TRUST GOD IN THE UNEXPECTED

Humble faith includes recognizing God is in control of all circumstances, even the unexpected challenges we face. Mary and Joseph were an ordinary engaged couple when the angel Gabriel appeared and changed their plans: Mary would become pregnant with the Son of God through the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26-38). Neither Joseph nor Mary knew what raising the Savior would entail, but they believed God had the power to do the impossible and trusted that He would help them along the way, even into the unknown. In each vignette in Luke's Gospel, from the shepherds that arrived at Jesus's birth to finding the twelve-year-old Christ at the temple, we see that humble faith does not mean waiting to obey until we have all the answers. Mary and Joseph showed faithful commitment to raise Jesus in fulfillment of the law while leaning on God to direct them. We too can trust God when it comes to raising our children, facing job loss, navigating health issues, or helping the needy in our community, even when we do not know what is coming next. Trusting God in every situation feels easier, though, when we remember that God works all things out for our good (Rom. 8:28).

## LET GO OF EGO

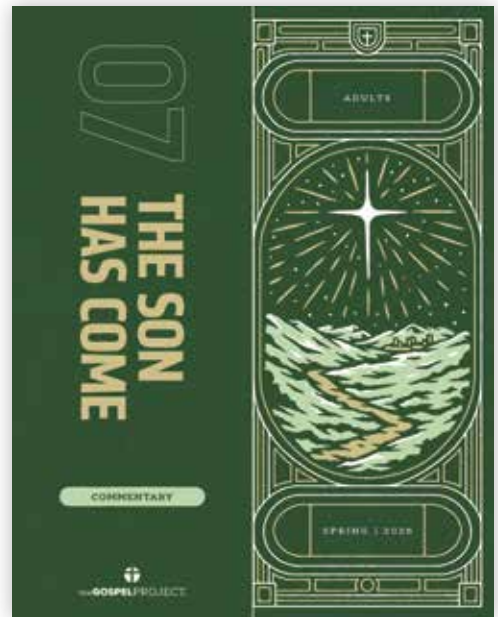
If anyone had a reason to boast, it was John the Baptist. Even Jesus said there was no one born of woman who was greater than John (Matt. 11:11), and then Jesus added, "but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." John humbly pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29-30), did not try to stop his disciples when they left to follow Jesus (vv. 35-37), and said that his joy was complete in watching Jesus's ministry unfold in all its glory (3:29). The Lord is pleased when we do kingdom work, whether that is sharing the gospel with others or teaching a small group. But remember that Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). Humble faith means committing to serving God and others, even if the Lord is the only One who notices. Our joy is complete in His glory, not ours.

## POINT OTHERS TO CHRIST

Many times we shy away from evangelizing because we feel like we don't know how. The first disciples, however, eagerly brought others to Jesus before they really understood His mission. Andrew told his brother, Peter, "We have found the Messiah!" (John 1:41), and Philip told Nathanael, "Come and see!" (v. 46). They didn't know all that following Jesus would entail, but they devoted three years to following Him and preaching about God's kingdom. After Jesus's resurrection, the Holy Spirit led them to share the gospel everywhere they went, until each one of them was martyred or exiled. With the Holy Spirit's guidance and our humble submission to do His will, we too can point others to come and see the Savior of the world, trusting in Jesus to reconcile sinners to God (2 Cor. 5:20).

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UNIT 19 • SESSION 3

## THE VISIT

CORE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 2:1-12

**Context:** Mary and Joseph experienced much in the years surrounding Jesus's birth. An angel gave each of them a message concerning God's Son being conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 1:18-25). A Roman census sent them traveling to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born and visited by shepherds. And at the temple in Jerusalem, they were amazed at Simeon's and Anna's reactions to their infant Son (Luke 2:25-38). Some time later, still in Bethlehem, they received yet more visitors—this time wise men from a pagan land looking for the promised King.

**Key Concept:** Jesus is the true King and worthy to be worshiped.

### DAILY READINGS

- Day 1: Matthew 2:1-6
- Day 2: Matthew 2:7-12
- Day 3: Matthew 2:13-15
- Day 4: Matthew 2:16-18
- Day 5: Matthew 2:19-23
- Day 6: Psalm 47

Jesus came from humble means to be our humble King (Matthew 21:6).



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him."<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born. <sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

### Two Kings in Opposition

The Gospel of Matthew opens not with fireworks but with a genealogy (Matt. 1:1-17)—firmly rooting Jesus in God's divine promises to Israel. Yet when we arrive at Matthew 2:1-6, the veil of ordinary surroundings is still intact. There was no throne, no crown, no royal parade for the newborn Messiah. Still, in these verses, Matthew made a seismic claim: the true King was born—not merely a ruler of Israel but the long-promised King who was worthy of worship.

This King of kings came in obscurity, humility, and vulnerability. Yet His arrival was no less authoritative, no less royal. His birth carried divine weight, disoriented worldly power, and fulfilled ancient prophecy. Jesus came into humble circumstances to be our humble King—a truth that demands a response. Knowing Jesus as King will either stir worship or



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## THE SON HAS COME

The eternal Son of God entered history with humble beginnings as a baby but fulfilled prophecies from Old Testament writers. He came as fully God and fully man to grow in wisdom and stature. He was baptized and tempted but never sinned because He was the spotless Lamb of God we needed to take away the sins of the world. Loved by some and hated by others, Jesus disrupted the religious standards of the day to usher forth the kingdom of God to bring salvation to all nations. He truly is greater than us, for He is the Son of Man and the Son of God, our Savior.

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