



SESSION 7: Encounters with the King

# **The Women at the Well**



# CHRIST CENTRAL

## Session 7: Women at the Well

### Key takeaways for Pre-Disciples:

- Jesus is the one who truly satisfies our longings, with true life with God that lasts forever
- Because of Jesus, we can know and worship God in our spirit in truth, not needing to go to any specific location.
- Jesus crosses boundaries to seek out those on the fringes of society

### Part 1

identity

worship

mission

### Part 1: catch up

- Icebreaker question – Get everyone to share about how their week has gone, what has been happening in their life in the past 7 days. Listen out for things you could pray for.
- Ask everyone how they got on sharing the story
  - (this is not to keep tabs on people, but is a helpful reminder that part of them learning the story well is you asking them every week if they managed to share it.)
- Ask someone to re-tell last week's story

### Part 2 (story)

identity

community

mission

## The Women at the Well (John 4:1-30, 39-42)

Story-Audio-Link: <https://christ-central.org.uk/pre-disciple/>

*So Jesus continued to travelling through the country healing the sick and teaching about the Kingdom of God and many people were following Jesus. **Now just to the north, in the neighbouring country, lived a people who were the sworn enemies of the Jews**, so in order to get to his home region, **Jesus decided to travel straight through this country with his disciples.***

*At midday, whilst they were travelling through, Jesus was tired and stopped to rest by a well while his disciples went to find food. And there was a local woman there at the well and Jesus asked her for some water. The woman said 'why are you, a Jewish man, asking me for a drink?' Jesus replied '**if you knew the gift God had for you, and who was speaking to you, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.**'*

*The women said '**you haven't got anything to draw water with, all of our ancestors have needed something to draw water with...are you greater than they are?**'*



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*Jesus replied 'everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again, **but anyone who drinks the water that I give them, will never be thirsty again, instead it will become a fresh spring of water giving eternal life.**'*

*The woman said, 'sir, give me this water!'*

*Jesus said 'go and call your husband and come back'*

*The woman said 'I don't have a husband.'*

*'You are correct.' Jesus replied 'you've had husbands and the man you are living with now is not your husband.'*

*The woman asked 'I can see you are prophet, so tell me, you Jews **only worship God in Jerusalem**, but we have our own mountains where we worship, so **which is right?**'*

*Jesus looked at the woman and said, '**you know, a time is coming and has actually now come, when worship will no longer be about any particular location, but true worshipper will worship God in their spirit and in truth, those are the people my Father is seeking out.**'*

*The woman said, 'we know God's promised king is coming, and he will explain this to us when he comes.'*

***Jesus said to the women, 'I am that king.'***

*At this the women, saw Jesus disciples returning, and **she ran back to her town and told all her friends and neighbours, 'come and hear about this man who knew everything about my life, could this be God's promised king?'**. And she brought the whole town to Jesus, and they begged him to stay in their town. **And after they had spent a few days listening to Jesus and asking questions, and they believed in Him, that he was the promised king who had come to save the world. Not just because of the women's story, but because they heard it for themselves.***

And that's the story from God's word

**Re-tell the story as group:** allow everyone to share a section of the story. If there is more than 6 people consider breaking up into pairs to retell the story.

### Questions for discussion

1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
2. What bothered you about this story?
3. What does this story show you about God?
4. What does this story show you about people?

### Part 3 (practice / takeaways)

identity

worship

mission



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Ask the remaining questions:

5. What does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story?
6. How will you remember this story? (tell it!)
7. Who are you able to tell this story to?

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story.

### **Notes for leaders - questions / topics that may arise**

#### **Why is the woman shocked that Jesus is talking to her?**

- Jesus is in the region of Samaria. Around 900 years before Jesus, Israel as a nation politically fragmented into two nations Israel to the north (sometimes known as Samaria) and Judah to the south. The book of Kings tells the story of how the northern tribes slip further and further into idolatry and injustice until they are uprooted and exiled by the Assyrian empire in 722bc. The land is eventually repopulated by a mixture of peoples who in typical Ancient Near East fashion they adopted the local god, alongside the gods of the ancestors. You can read about this in 2 Kings 17:24-41. After this resettlement of the land and the return from exile, Jews and Samaritans remain divided on theology (the Samaritans worship on Mt. Gerazim and only acknowledge the first 5 books of Moses to be the word of God) but even more so socially, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century there was a deep seated hatred between the two people groups, especially from Jews towards Samaritans, whom they considered as 'impure compromisers' who had abandoned God. Jesus crosses this socially boundary by speaking to this woman of Samaria. The second boundary Jesus crosses which would've shocked her, was for a man to engage in conversation a woman whom he wasn't related to alone. In traditional Middle Eastern cultures this is still considered a taboo.

#### **So what is living water?**

- So Jesus tells the woman at the well that whoever drinks the water that he gives will become a spring of water bubbling up with eternal life. Living water can be understood both in a literal meaning and a metaphorical meaning. Firstly, living water is fresh, running water...i.e. water that has not been sat in a well. It is the first meaning that this woman assumes Jesus is talking about, some kind of hidden spring in the middle of an arid landscape. However, Jesus is not talking about physical water but is using 'living water' in its metaphorical use. Water in the middle-east is precious, and is a daily concern for life for all humans, without it we die.
- In the Old Testament living water is used to refer to the blessing and life that flows from the presence of God into the world as the rivers flowed out of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2, Ezekiel 47, Revelation 22). The prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah use



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living waters as the metaphor of the very life of God that he seeks to give us out to us that we might no longer thirst (Jeremiah 2, Isaiah, 49,55). This very life of God that is given, is God himself, God's Spirit as John tell us later in his narrative (ch.7v37-39).

- Therefore eternal life that causes, true satisfaction(never thirsting again) , is the very presence of God in his spirit which only Jesus the promised king, can give(as we learnt in the baptism story he is The One who baptises in God's Spirit).

### **What is eternal life?**

- Simply, Eternal life is the life that we were made to enjoy with God, in his presence and relationship. Thus when God comes to live in his people through his spirit we have eternal life because we are joined back in relationship with God the giver of life. This is something that starts when God's Spirit comes into our lives and makes His home in us, and it continues through death, when those who have eternal life will be raised in an body that is as incorruptible as the life that is currently at work in their lives now, and eternal life will be with God physically as believers are spiritual with God through his spirit dwelling in them.



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### Feedback from Group Leader

In our vision for discipleship, we have identified 4 key ingredients to healthy and growing disciples. As you are leading your group, for each session, make some notes under each heading for how the group is faring in each of these areas .

**identity**

**worship**

**community**

**mission**