

STUDY GUIDE

CALVARY COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

SCRIPTURE: John 4:1-42

WEEK OF: December 3, 2017



MAIN POINT

Knowing Jesus as the Savior of the world and the only source of eternal life should compel us to joyfully and urgently share the gospel.

GETTING STARTED

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

- ▶ **When you were a child, what was your ambition for life? What did you want to be when you grew up?**
- ▶ **Why did you have that ambition or goal as a kid? If you are doing that today, what kept you focused on the task? If you are doing something different, what made you change your mind along the way?**
- ▶ **What is the most significant opportunity you ever took advantage of? What is the most significant opportunity that you passed up or missed? What lessons have you learned from both?**
- ▶ **TRANSITION:** Life presents us with countless opportunities—some that we embrace, and some that we reject. In today's lesson, we look at Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman and the way she responded to the truth of who Christ is, seizing the opportunity to tell everyone about the all-satisfying life she found in Jesus.

INTO THE BIBLE

READ JOHN 4:1-26

- ▶ **How did Jesus balance nonjudgmental compassion with un-compromised truth in His relationship with the woman? How can we do the same in our relationships with others?**
- ▶ **What did Jesus' offer indicate about who He was? What desires or longings do we often look to the world to satisfy today, when the ultimate fulfillment will only be found in Jesus?**

* **HELPFUL INSIGHT:** "Living water" here largely referred to running water, like that of a stream or river. It would have been cleaner than stagnant water from a well. But Jesus meant something more than clean water. He was referring to eternal life. Once she realized that Jesus was no ordinary man, the conversation changed as He told her about all she had done. She knew He was the Messiah—the true source of redemption and life.

READ JOHN 4:27-30

- ▶ **How did the living water she found spur her to tell others about Jesus out of joy and compassion, rather than obligation? What can we learn about her urgency, given that she left her jar?**
- ▶ **How would you describe the disciples' attitude toward Jesus when they came back to Him? Why do you think they responded in that way?**

* **HELPFUL INSIGHT:** The disciples seemed confused as to Jesus' purpose. They were speechless as to what Jesus was doing in speaking to a Samaritan woman. The woman responded to Jesus by going and telling everyone. The disciples did nothing.

READ JOHN 4:31-34

- ▶ **Why did the disciples urge Jesus to eat? What does Jesus' statement about food in verses 32 and 34 reveal about what truly satisfies, particularly in light of the previous discussion on living water?**
- ▶ **What were the disciples focused on in this passage? How might their focus have been different if their dependency on and gratitude for Jesus had been more like the Samaritan woman's?**

* **HELPFUL INSIGHT:** Because Jesus' disciples were focused exclusively on the earthly task of satisfying their hunger and thirst, they were oblivious to the spiritual realities taking place around them in the lives of the Samaritans. Ultimately, even more than food and water, the people needed Jesus—as do we. Because of that, all believers are equipped to share with others the way to meet their needs through Christ by telling of His grace, love, and salvation. Jesus taught them to prioritize God's mission of expanding the kingdom above all earthly purposes.

READ JOHN 4:35-42

- ▶ **Jews in Jesus' day predominantly looked upon Samaritans with disdain, yet Jesus chose to first reveal His identity to a Samaritan—and an adulterous woman at that. What person or group of people are you currently critical of? How would Jesus interact with this group?**
- ▶ **In what ways could you use your relationship with them to exemplify Jesus' grace and goodness? How could it draw you both into a deeper relationship with Him?**

* **HELPFUL INSIGHT:** The primary point Jesus made to His disciples was that they must be spiritually minded in order to be of true earthly good. The potential for kingdom advancement is immediate and vast. The world's need for the gospel and the high potential for saving faith compel Jesus' followers to be joyfully, willingly on mission to all people at all times, even when earthly needs seem more compelling.

- ▶ **Why did the Samaritans come to faith? How might God have used the example of the woman—the repentance, freedom, and redemption she had found—to draw them to Himself?**

* **HELPFUL INSIGHT:** Ultimately, the Samaritans came to faith, not by any human efforts, but by the grace of God as He called them into relationship with Himself. But in His good purposes, God worked through the woman's bold witness to do so. The Samaritans became closer in relationship to Jesus by becoming closer in relationship to her, as she showed them firsthand how good Jesus' mercy, grace, and life really are—just as we can do in our relationships.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- ▶ **What are you relying on as the “food” (v. 34) to sustain you this week? If this is anything other than Jesus, what will be the result? If it is Jesus, how will this affect your relationships with others?**
- ▶ **What excuses do you typically make when confronted with the opportunity to guide someone to discover life in Jesus? How does Jesus' teaching in this passage speak to those excuses?**
- ▶ **What specific opportunities do you need to take to “reap the harvest” in your life right now?**

PRAYER

- ▶ **Pray that in your relationships in family, work and the community of our city you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim God's saving grace, spurring others toward a closer relationship with Jesus out of genuine love and compassion for those around you.**
- ▶ **Pray that as you do, God will be glorified as He carries out His plan to restore all things to Himself.**