

Discuss Guide
August 15, 2021
The Samaritan Woman
John 4:4-26

The Jews and the Samaritans hated each other and had for many centuries. In fact, most faithful Jews would avoid Samaria and go around it rather than travel through it.

Verse 4's instruction that Jesus HAD to go through Samaria indicates He was on mission to achieve a particular goal, meet a certain person, engage in a specific conversation

The Samaritan woman is a pagan, an enemy of the Jews, and even an outcast among her own people as indicated by the fact she gathered water in the heat of the day after the other women had collected water in the cool of the morning

Many people hate the Bible and Christianity because they believe it teaches things that they don't like: male superiority, slavery, or other cultural practices

Jesus asks for a drink, and the woman responds facetiously. Then Jesus offers her living water; a metaphor for the Spirit of God inhabiting your heart and providing fulfillment, meaning, and joy

The woman uses the truth that she's not currently married in an attempt to hide her history, but Jesus tells her about herself in order to show that her sin does not disqualify her to receive God's love and saving grace

This woman is apparently using relationships with men to provide meaning. It's a false idol which has led her to heartbreak. Only Christ provides the real meaning our souls long for.

Questions for Discussion

1. Was there anything in the teaching that stood out to you?
2. Why do you think Jesus said He HAD to go through Samaria?
3. Do you think the Samaritan woman was mocking Jesus when she asked about His living water, or do you think she was legitimately interested in what He was offering?

4. Do you think she was surprised and gratified they a Jewish man would have a meaningful conversation with her? Or do you think she was suspicious and reluctant to speak with Him?
5. Do you think it was a good thing that Jesus told her about her marital history and the fact she was currently living with a man with whom she wasn't married? Why was it good or bad?
6. Does it surprise you that after telling her about her marital situation and live in boyfriend, Jesus doesn't mention it again? Do you believe His lack of condemnation for her sin indicates He's trying to get at her deeper need, or do you think He's affirming her sin isn't that bad?
7. What do you believe Jesus is saying when He uses the phrase living water?
8. After Jesus tells her about her marital history and relationship issues, why do you think she immediately pivots to asking a question about the appropriate place to worship? Do you think she's deflecting, or do you think she's trying to understand how best to deal with her sin?
9. How does Jesus response that we should worship in Spirit and truth give the Samaritan woman — and us — relief from the burden of geographical or location based worship?
10. What's it mean that we must worship in Spirit and truth?