

“Breakthrough!” in 2022

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 07.24.2022

JESUS AND THE THIRSTY SOUL – JOHN 4:1-30

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

God designed our bodies with a thirst drive, but it’s not just water that we crave. Our souls were fashioned to thirst as well. They thirst for things like love, meaning, purpose, success, and significance and approval. Bruce Springsteen said it like this, ‘Everybody has a hungry heart.’ On social media, sometimes people will post suggestive pictures in an attempt to get other people to comment on how good they look. They call that setting a ‘thirst trap.’ This world is full of ‘thirst-traps.’ The truth is, we’re all thirsty, but if we’re not careful, we can end up drinking from wells that can’t really satisfy us. You’ve got to be careful about where you go to quench your thirst. A long time ago, Jesus had an interesting conversation with a woman at a well. We are never told her actual name. She is simply referred to as ‘the woman at the well’ but perhaps that’s fitting because she represents all of us. The topic of their conversation that day revolved around water and thirst and the only thing that can truly satisfy the human heart. Let’s get into our study...

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

1. What struck you most or spoke to you from the message this last weekend?
2. Can you remember a time when you had a really strange or awkward conversation? What happened?
3. What makes a conversation good or bad? Who is your favorite person to sit down and talk to? Why?

We all have favorite people to talk with—it could be a spouse, parent, or friend. Conversations go all sorts of directions, but the best conversations often have an intentional goal—a purpose that seeks to help and improve one or both people. Jesus had this type of conversation with a woman in Samaria.

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:1-6

1. Why do you think Jesus had to travel through Samaria? What was strange about this?

Jesus and His disciples left Jerusalem for Galilee, traveling by way of Samaria. Jews in those days tried to avoid the Samaritan route because they considered the people in the region to be unclean. Jesus led His disciples toward the Samaritan town of Sychar, where they stopped at Jacob’s well, a religious landmark as well as a source of water.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:7-14.

1. What might the Samaritan woman have thought when she came to the well in the middle of the day and found a Jewish man sitting next to it?
2. How might the woman have felt having a conversation at the town well?
3. Why did Jesus speak to the woman at the well? Why did that surprise her?
4. What people in our community would be surprised if you spoke to them? Why?

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The Samaritan woman would have been surprised not only that someone was at the well, but also that the person was a Jewish man who wanted to talk. Jesus began the conversation with the woman for one specific reason. For the same reason, He struck up conversations with other people in His ministry. He could tell she had a spiritual thirst that only the living water He alone could offer would quench.

1. The Samaritan woman and Jesus have two different ideas about “living water.” What were they?
2. Why was the living water Jesus described attractive to the woman?

Jesus talked about the water and described living water that gave new life, but the Samaritan woman thought He meant running water, like a river or stream. The woman wanted living water that would never leave her thirsty, because she would not need to go to the well everyday.

3. How did Jesus turn the conversation from His need to hers? How can you use this as you witness to others?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 4:15-30

1. What was the woman’s reason for going to the well at noon? Why was she avoiding people?
2. Why do you think the Samaritan woman had so many husbands? What might she have been seeking through these relationships?
3. Why did Jesus tell her to call her husband?

The woman had been married five times and lived with a man that was not her husband. She was an outcast and perhaps could not go to the well in the morning because she feared having to talk with the other women and hear their snickering. Jesus knew about her failures. He drew her attention to them by bringing up her husband (v. 16). He had a strategic reason for asking her to return to her home and bring back her husband. With His request, Jesus wanted her to get honest with Him about her situation. Accordingly, He guided her to confront her failure. In order to receive God’s gift of living water, she had to admit she had failed in her attempt to meet her deepest spiritual need by herself. Admitting this meant coming face to face with the failures in her life.

1. Why was it important for her to confront her failures? Why is it important for us to confront ours?
2. Why did the woman first think Jesus was a prophet? Why did she end by asking if Jesus was the Christ? How did her opinion of Jesus change during their conversation?

The Samaritan woman’s failure did not start with her lifestyle of immorality. Neither did it begin with her series of failed relationships. Her lifestyle pointed to a far more serious problem. Her lifestyle exhibited the reality of her sin. Therefore, she failed because she was a sinner. Jesus engaged the woman with intentional conversation that addressed her deepest needs. As they spoke, she discovered more and more who Jesus was: a man, a prophet, the Christ.

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Jesus was a Jewish Rabbi. She was a Samaritan woman. They weren’t supposed to talk to each other. But Jesus didn’t care about social norms or cultural customs. He cared about her. Others might have ignored her or looked past her. Not Jesus. He didn’t ignore her or diminish her or devalue her or discriminate against her. He saw her and looked into her eyes and spoke to her. In fact, this is the longest recorded conversation that you’ll find anywhere in the gospels between Jesus and another person. He saw her and He sees you. He moved heaven and earth to meet with her and He will do the same for you. He is the ‘Good Shepherd’ who leaves the 99 sheep to go after the one lost lamb.

1. Do you feel as if there are reasons you are not good enough for Jesus? How does this story speak against this feeling?

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2. How can you use your testimony and salvation story to share the message of Christ?
3. In what people or things are you most tempted to look for fulfillment instead of looking to Christ? How can we hold one another accountable to look only to Christ this week? Who will you share these truths with this week?

PRAYER - Close your group time in prayer by praying specifically for any needs or hurts that surfaced during your discussion. Pray that group members would look only to Christ for fulfillment and purpose and would be bold enough to share the gospel with those who need to hear it. Look for the thirsty souls!

“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary.” {Isaiah 40:28}