

Use Week of:

Unit 21 • Session 4

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE:

John 4

STORY POINT:

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit
to those who believe.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What makes people special?
People are special because we are
made in God's image, as male
and female, to know Him.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 214



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 216



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 222



Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit MinistryGrid.com/thegospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

At the time Jesus was on earth, Jews and Samaritans didn't get along. The strife between the two groups stretched back hundreds of years, to the Babylonian exile.

When the Babylonians attacked Judah, they moved a large group of God's people away from their homes. But some of the people—the poorest, sickest, least able to work—were left behind in the region that became known as Samaria. The exile lasted 70 years. During that time, those left in Samaria began to mingle with their neighbors to the north. They intermarried and practiced foreign customs. While the Samaritans still believed in God, they adapted foreign beliefs as well.

The Jews who returned home from Babylon to rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem rejected this new way of life. They were dedicated to obeying and worshiping God, so they didn't agree with the Samaritans' practices. The Samaritans opposed the Jews' efforts to reestablish their nation. In time, the Jews' hate for the Samaritans grew—so much so that a Jew traveling from Judea to Galilee would take a longer route to travel around Samaria rather than through it.

Jesus broke down barriers when He traveled to Galilee by way of Samaria. Even more surprising, Jesus stopped at a well around noon and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink. Jewish men did not speak to women in public.

But Jesus was kind to her, and He offered her a gift: living water. The woman didn't understand, but Jesus revealed His knowledge of her past. He even gave her a glimpse of the future. The Samaritan woman expected a Messiah to come and fix everything. Jesus said, "I am He."

Explain to kids that the living water Jesus offers is the Holy Spirit. (See John 7:37-39.) The Holy Spirit is a gift that He is eager to give us when we ask Him. Those who receive His grace will never be thirsty again.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

John 4

Jesus had been teaching in Judea. He and His disciples began traveling back to Galilee. They traveled through Samaria and stopped in a town with a well. Jesus' disciples went into town to buy food.

While Jesus was at the well, a Samaritan woman came to get water from the well. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

The woman was surprised. "Why are You talking to me?" she asked. "You're a Jew, and I'm a Samaritan."

Jesus said, "I asked you for a drink. You don't know who I am. If you did, you would have asked Me for a drink, and I would give you living water."

The woman was confused. She said, "Sir, this well is deep, and You don't have a bucket.

Where do You get this 'living water'?"

Jesus said, "Anyone who drinks this well water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water I give will never be thirsty again! In fact, the water I give will become a well inside you, and you will have eternal life." Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit, but the woman did not understand.

"Sir," she said, "give me this water. If I'm not thirsty, I won't have



to keep coming to this well to get water.”

“Go get your husband,” Jesus said.

“I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus knew she was telling the truth. He said, “You don’t have a husband now, but you’ve had five husbands.”

Jesus was right. “I see You are a prophet,” the woman said. Maybe this prophet could explain something to her. She said, “The Samaritans worship here on a mountain, but the Jews say we need to worship at the temple in Jerusalem.”

Jesus said, “Soon you will not need to be in either of those places to worship God in spirit and in truth.”

The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.”

Then Jesus said, “I am the Messiah.”

The woman left and told the people in her town, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Messiah?”

Many Samaritans believed in Jesus because of what the woman said. Jesus stayed in their town for two days. Many more believed because of what Jesus said. They told the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this really is the Savior of the world.”

Christ Connection: Jesus offers something better than physical water; He gives us Himself. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who comes to Him by faith. We can worship Him as Lord and Savior wherever we are.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use props:** Carry a bucket or water jug as you tell the Bible story.
- **Display a map:** Show a Bible times map and point out the locations of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. Consider using the New Testament Israel Map from the Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970).

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 4

STORY POINT: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share what their favorite beverages are.

SAY • No matter what your favorite drink is, many people agree that clean water is one of the healthiest things we can drink. Our bodies need water to live, and because it doesn't have any calories, sugar, or sweeteners, it's considered a lot healthier than sodas or juice. Today we will learn about a special kind of water that only Jesus can give, and it's the best of all.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Well Wares" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Well Wares" activity page. Instruct the kids to circle all the items a person could use to drink water from the well. They will find three jugs, one bucket, and ten cups.

SAY • Today we will learn about a very special talk Jesus had with a woman He met at a well in Samaria. What might Jesus have told her?

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Everything you did

Instruct the kids to sit on the floor. Select a volunteer to come in front of the other kids and act out something she did the day before. Allow the rest of the group to guess what she is acting out. Whoever is correct will take the next turn acting out something he did.

SAY • We do all kinds of things in a day. Some things might be easy for another to guess, such as eating or sleeping, but other things might be hard to guess. Today we will hear a story about a time Jesus showed He knew about a person's sin without her telling Him.

OPTION 2: Watercolors

Provide each kid with paper and a paintbrush. Instruct kids to share the watercolors and to dip their brushes in a cup of water between using any two colors. Give them time to paint a picture of whatever they would like to paint. You may wish to provide smocks or oversized T-shirts or to protect clothing.

SAY • Those colors are beautiful, but they didn't really work as paint until we added water to them. Today we will learn about a kind of water Jesus said He would add to our lives to allow us to live for Him.

- paper
- watercolor paints
- paintbrushes,
1 per kid
- cups
- water
- paper towels for
cleanup
- smocks or oversized
T-shirts to protect
clothing (optional)

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 4

STORY POINT: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Countdown

· countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

· leader attire
· first aid kit

[Leader enters wearing navy blue cargo pants and a short-sleeve white button-down. He or she is carrying a first aid kit.]

LEADER • Hey there, folks! I'm glad to see you. I just got done admitting a man into the hospital with severe heatstroke. As the weather gets warmer, it is growing more and more important to take precautions if you know you're going to be outside for a long time. This poor gentleman was working on getting his yard all ready for the summer months, and he forgot almost all of the important steps necessary to be safe in hot weather.

It's important to protect your skin and eyes with sunblock and sunglasses. It's also important to wear cool, breathable clothing. A nice, wide-brimmed hat to keep the sun off our face is always a good idea too. And most importantly, you need to drink lots of water. Many times, we don't realize just how much

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

fluid we lose to sweat. It's important to rehydrate yourself when you are having fun in the sun. Some experts say that an adult should drink around two liters, nearly half a gallon, each day—maybe even more if you will be working hard in the sun. Now, for you kids, that would likely be too much water, but my point is you should stay hydrated in the heat.

You know, it reminds me of a Bible story. Let me tell you about the time Jesus was thirsty and met a woman who needed water even more than He did. But not regular water, living water!

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As we hear this story, I want you to remember the big picture question and answer. *What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.* That means that God loves each of us uniquely. He wants all of us to be saved by trusting Jesus. He wants to have a loving relationship with us as our heavenly Father. No other created thing is described as “made in God's image.” Only humans carry that extra special distinction.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

LEADER • Jesus' public ministry was under way. **People came to Jesus and He healed them. Jesus taught that He is the Messiah,** but some still rejected Him. **Jesus taught that we must be born again.** Let's hear what else He taught.

- Bibles
- “Jesus and the Samaritan Woman” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus and the Samaritan Woman.”

LEADER • Jesus stopped to talk to a woman, which was a bit strange in those days. More than that, she was a Samaritan; the Samaritans and the Jews did not get along well. Many years before, when the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by Assyria, some of the people living in Samaria—their capital—did not get taken away. However, most of those people did not obey God; they married people who worshiped false gods. As a result, the Jewish people who came back from Babylon did not like the disobedient Samaritans who were still living in the land.

Jesus loved the Samaritan woman though. He was not bothered that she was a woman or that she was a Samaritan; she was special to God. ***What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God’s image, as male and female, to know Him.***

Jesus knew all about the woman’s sin and still wanted to know her and save her. He talked about living water, but she was confused. He didn’t mean literal water, He meant the Holy Spirit. **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.** The Holy Spirit lives inside believers, and He helps us to understand God’s Word and obey Him.

When we have the Holy Spirit living within us, love and joy begin to fill our lives and overflow into the lives of the people around us. We become like a new well that can provide refreshment to our friends,

family, and everyone we meet. If we tell them the good news about Jesus, and they believe, they will be filled with the Holy Spirit also! In that way, it is almost like our “living water” can transfer into the lives of others.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus offers something better than physical water; He gives us Himself. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who comes to Him by faith. We can worship Him as Lord and Savior wherever we are. We can spread the good news about Jesus and help other people begin a relationship with Him. Then they can be filled with living water too!

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 21, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how they can share the gospel with someone they may not have anything in common with. Guide them to discuss ways they can show the love of Jesus to everyone they meet this week.

• “Unit 21, Session 4”
Questions from Kids
video

Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the “Walk Church in Prayer” printable and ask a volunteer to read the caption. Stop and pray, or ask for a volunteer to pray according to the provided prompt.

• “Walk Church in
Prayer” printable

LEADER • The Ratners and the Christians at Walk Church believe in the power of prayer and that the Holy Spirit will help them share Jesus with more people. **Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.** Let’s pray that the Holy Spirit will help the Ratners and missionaries all over the world.

· Key Passage Poster
· “In This Way (John 3:16)” song

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 3:16. Then sing “In This Way (John 3:16).”

LEADER • Our key passage reminds us that God displayed His love for us in a very amazing way. God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Everyone who believes in Jesus will be saved from sin and live forever with God.

Sing (4 minutes)

· “Take It to the Lord” song

LEADER • Jesus loves us no matter who we are or what we have done. He wants everyone to know God, experience forgiveness, and be free from sin. He is the greatest friend we could have.

Sing together “Take It to the Lord.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Jesus. We cannot earn Your love, and we praise You for loving us anyway. Help us love others with love that overflows from You. Give us wisdom and courage to share the gospel with those around us. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 4

STORY POINT: Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- marker
- plastic cups

Before the session, write each word or phrase of the key passage on a separate plastic cup. Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Thank each kid for her efforts and encourage all the kids to keep working to memorize the verse. Then, provide the cups to the group and challenge them to work together to put the key passage in order.

SAY • God didn't just say He loves us, He showed it. God proved His love by His plan to send Jesus to die for us and make the way to have forgiveness and eternal life. Our key passage reminds us that we don't have to do anything to earn this amazing gift. As soon as we believe the gospel, we get eternal life!

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find John 4. Briefly review how to use the table of contents to find books of the Bible, and remind kids that the large numbers mark the different chapters, while the small numbers separate each chapter into different verses. Consider showing the New Testament Israel Map to help kids understand where Samaria is. (F4)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What did Jesus ask for when He first saw the Samaritan woman? (*a drink of water, John 4:7*)
2. What did Jesus say would happen to a person who drinks the living water? (*He will never thirst again. It will become a well in him. He will have eternal life; John 4:14*)
3. Where did Jesus say people will worship God? (*anywhere, in spirit and truth; John 4:23-24*)
4. What is the living water Jesus spoke about? *Guide kids to see that the living water is a picture of what the Holy Spirit is like. When we believe the gospel, Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to live within us. He helps us to love and obey God and fills our lives with joy and love so that we can “overflow” joy and love onto other people.*
5. What does it mean to worship God in spirit and in truth? *Discuss how everyone worships something, but only believers worship the one true God. Point out that worshipping in spirit means that our very core, including our emotions, is involved in worshipping God. Explain that worshipping in truth means we worship the true God when we understand the wonderful truth of what He has done for us.*
6. How can we receive “living water”? *Remind the kids that the Bible teaches everyone who believes the gospel will be saved. Help them understand that when we believe the gospel, we repent of sin and love God. God forgives our sin, gives us new hearts, and sends the Holy Spirit to live in us and help us obey God out of love.*

SAY • Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.

Anyone can be a believer because Jesus loves all people. The gift of salvation is freely offered to us.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

- map of the United States
- yarn
- sticky notes
- crayons
- tape

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.



OPTION 1: Prayer map

Display a map of the United States. Distribute sticky notes and crayons. Invite kids to think of ways they can pray for Christians at Walk Church and other Christians who are sharing the gospel in Nevada. Ask kids to write their prayer requests on the sticky notes or draw a picture representing that request. For example, a kid might draw a Bible to represent prayers that more people will learn about the Bible. Allow each kid to tape a piece of yarn from your state to Nevada. Then add the sticky note. Take time to pray for missionaries, asking volunteers to pray aloud.

SAY • Praying is a very important and powerful way that we support missionaries and churches around the world. That's why people ask us to please pray for them. They know that our prayers matter!

Consider leaving the map displayed in your room for a few weeks to remind kids to pray for missionaries.

OPTION 2: Blessing overflow

Provide a sheet of paper and a pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw pictures of a few things they consider to be blessings. Help them think through things like their families, their school, their friends, their church family, and so forth. Then challenge the kids to wad their papers into balls and toss them into the cup. Allow them a few chances, or they may simply place their paper wad in the cup. By the end, the cup should be overflowing with paper wads.

SAY • God blesses us in so many ways. It is good to remember the blessings we have from God. The Bible teaches that every good gift is from God. The best gift we could receive is salvation from sin. **Jesus**

LOW PREP

- plastic cup
- paper
- pencils

gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe. When we have the Holy Spirit living with us, our hearts overflow with joy, and the blessings in our lives can be used to bless other people too.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.