

John 4

“Jesus: Savior of the World (Part 2)”

Scripture: John 4:1-42

Memory Verse: John 4:42b “...*this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.*”

Lesson Focus: We will cover the full story of the Samaritan woman at the well and emphasize how RADICAL it was that Jesus crossed into a place of hostility and reached out in love to someone everyone else rejected.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Samaritan Woman and Jesus, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Make It Real Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Living Water

Starter Activity: Cheese Touch

We will keep all of the kids in the Summit Room for this starter activity. We will watch a clip from the movie, “Diary of a Wimpy Kid”. This is the “Cheese Touch” scene which a lot of the kids should be familiar with.

Q: How many of you are familiar with the “cheese touch” story from Diary of a Wimpy Kid books? In this story there is this ugly, gross slice of cheese on the ground and when a kid touches it, he gets labeled as the “cheese touch kid”. Everyone then avoids and shuns that kid, treating him as if he is gross and ugly just like the cheese.

[Now play the scene from the movie]

Q: Is this OK? No! Yet, labeling people like this is something that happens all of the time! Why do you think we do this? *

A: By putting others down and labeling them, it wrongly makes us feel better about ourselves.

Now a lot of the Jewish people in Jesus’ day “labeled” everybody that wasn’t Jewish like this! The Jewish people were, after all, God’s chosen people, so many of them viewed all other non-Jewish people groups like an ugly, gross slice of cheese that should be avoided or thrown out. This was never God’s intent though!

Q: Do you think Jesus saw non-Jewish people this way? No!

In our study today, we are going to see Jesus do something RADICAL. He is going to go into “cheese-touch” territory and talk to “cheese-touch” people! Let’s take a look!

[Now dismiss the 1st and 2nd graders into their classrooms for their lesson]

Bible Study:

John 4:1-5: Jesus decided to split from Jerusalem because He knew the Pharisees were after Him. Remember that Jerusalem was the HQ of the Pharisees. In v. 3 it says that he was heading back to Galilee. But notice v. 4-5 says that He went through Samaria!

Samaria is like “cheese-touch” land. The Jewish people hated the Samaritans (and the Samaritans didn’t like the Jews either!). They were actually distant relatives of each other, but the Jewish people of the day considered them garbage.

Q: What do we call this ugly attitude toward people of a different ethnic background?
Racism or prejudice!

The most direct way to get to Galilee from Jerusalem was through Samaria. But there was a second longer route that Jewish people would often take to avoid going through “cheese-touch” land. *

John 4:6: Notice it says that Jesus was wearied from the journey. Remember that Jesus is the God-man! He is God, but also a real man. And in being a real man, He experienced real weariness, just like we do!

John 4:7-9: Whoa! Not only has Jesus entered “cheese-touch” territory, but He is now even talking to a “cheese-touch” person! Notice His disciples have left, so it is just Jesus and “Miss Cheese-Touch”. Even she is surprised that He is talking to her!

Women would usually come to draw water together as this would be an opportunity for them to socialize. * But notice this woman came alone! Because of this, a lot of experts believe that this woman was even rejected (cheese-touch) by her own people!

Teachers: Transition into the skit (see last two pages). We will essentially act out John 4:7-26 (with some embellishments) which is the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. Have a leader be Jesus, but have either another leader or girls from class act out the Samaritan woman. Notice there are two acts so consider using two different people for each act. There are also a few “freezes” throughout the skit for teaching. Afterwards, continue with the study.

Q: Did Jesus seem kind and gentle to this woman? Yes! Remember to Jewish people, this Samaritan woman was typically ignored and rejected (cheese-touch). Did Jesus do that? No! Despite her sinful state, He still reached out to her in mercy.

Q: But did Jesus ignore her sin? No! He was kind and gentle, yet He still made sure the business of her sin was dealt with! Bad news first, then good news!

John 4:27: Now His disciples are back and what is their reaction to Jesus talking to this woman? They are SHOCKED! Not only is she a Samaritan, but she is also a woman!

Women were not treated well in this culture, but take notice girls: Jesus shows us here that God loves girls just as much as He loves boys!

When Jesus came, He broke down the phony labels that people groups have put on each other, reinforcing what has always been true: that all human beings are created in the image of God, or with the mark of God (**Genesis 1:27**). Therefore, ALL human beings have equal value and worth (no matter skin color, ability, wealth, male, female). God has “labeled” each person as worthy of respect and importance.

This was RADICAL back then and it is still RADICAL today.

When you reach out to the “cheese-touch” kid at your school that has no friends or looks different from everyone else others will be shocked. You might even get laughed at! But this is one way you can stand out as a Christian, by following Jesus’ example and crossing those barriers and showing kindness even to the least.

John 4:28-30: This woman seems changed, doesn’t she? She is so excited about her meeting with Jesus that she runs and tells the folks in her city. **Read John 4:14** again. This woman appears to have taken a swig of this living water that Jesus offers and now she is full of joy and excitement about Jesus.

John 4:31-38: Here we see the disciples are confused like the woman was. For just as she was thinking about water, they seem to be thinking only about food. But in both cases, Jesus is using water and food to teach deeper, spiritual lessons.

Q: In these verses Jesus is talking about a harvest. What is a harvest?

A: It describes gathering all of the crops from a field or farm. *

Q: How many of you have ever planted something in a garden? What are the steps to follow?

A: Plant the seed, water and tend it, and then finally you gather the crop!

Jesus uses this illustration to teach His disciples to go out and be good gardeners, but not of food, but of **people**. And in this case, they were even challenged to go into the “cheese-touch” garden of Samaria!

John 4:39-42: Here we see the Samaritan woman being a good gardener to her own people. She ran to tell them about Jesus, they came, and it says that many of them became believers!

In v. 42, they said that they now know that this man is the Savior of the world.

Q: What does the word Savior mean?

A: Someone who saves or rescues someone from danger. These people realized that they needed to be saved from something and that Jesus could save them.

Q: What does Jesus save people from?

A: Punishment and misery because of our sin, both in this life and eternally.

To call someone your Savior, you first must admit that you have a problem that you need to be saved from!

Q: But Savior of the WORLD? What does **John 3:16** teach? That God loves the WHOLE WORLD. He gave His Son even to the “cheese-touch” people. **Revelation 5:9** gives us a snapshot of heaven where people from EVERY tribe, tongue, people, and nation are worshipping Jesus! Wow!

Key Point: ALL people are valuable to God. There is NO ROOM for labeling others like “cheese-touch” if you are a follower of Jesus. In heaven, there will be people from EVERY tribe, tongue, and nation who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior. No labels, no prejudice.

Q: Is there someone in your life that you can reach out to like Jesus reached out? Is there someone in your life that you can be a good gardener to just like this woman was to her own people?

Bring It Home

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: Savior of the World (Part 2)”

Scripture: John 4

Memory Verse: John 4:42b “...*this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.*”

Teachers/Parents: We shared a movie clip from “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” where kids label other kids and avoid or reject them, because of the phony label. All of us have experienced this, either being the one labeled, or maybe even the one doing the labelling. Share a relevant experience with your kids and your corresponding thoughts and feelings.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) **Read John 4:9.** We discussed how radical it was for Jesus to not only venture out into unfriendly Samaritan territory, but then to even dialogue with a woman. The labels the Jewish people had put on the Samaritans meant nothing to Jesus. What does this teach us about how we should view people different from us?
- 2) Many experts believe the woman at the well was even an outcast of her own Samaritan society because she was at the well alone and she lived an immoral life. Yet Jesus valued her enough to reach out to her and spend time with her. What does this teach us about how we should treat people that most everyone else has rejected?
- 3) **Read John 4:13-14.** Several weeks ago we studied the book of Ecclesiastes which chronicled Solomon’s failed attempts to find happiness in things of this world. How does Jesus’s teaching here correspond with Solomon’s experience?
- 4) As kind and gentle as Jesus was to this woman, **John 4:16-18** shows that He also confronted her about her sin. Her sin had to be dealt with before she could receive the living water. Do you have any secret sin that you are hiding that needs to be exposed and dealt with?
- 5) **John 4:23-24** challenges the common idea that we worship only at church. If God seeks people who worship in spirit and truth, it touches all parts of our lives. What are some ways that you can worship and adore God this week in your normal life activities?
- 6) **John 4:42**, spoken by Samaritans, reinforces what we know from **John 3:16:** That God loves the whole world that He sent His Son to be the savior of every tribe, tongue, and nation. Pick a people group that you might not know much about or maybe even have some prejudice against and pray for them together, that they would also meet Jesus and welcome Him in as their Savior.

Jesus and Samaritan Woman Script (Act 1)

Act 1: John 4:7-15

The act should begin by Jesus resting at the well with the woman drawing some water. The woman should respond with some attitude!

Jesus: Give me a drink, please.

Woman: Ummm...hello? You're Jewish and you are asking me, a Samaritan woman for a drink? Haha, that's funny!

Jesus: If you knew the gift of God and Who was talking to you, you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water.

Woman: OhhhKay....where do you get this living water? This well has been just fine for us. You must think you are pretty special to have found another well with this "living water", or whatever.

Jesus: Whoever drinks water from your well will thirst again. But whoever drinks of the water that I give will never thirst again and it will become a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life!

Woman: Could I have some then, Mr. Wise Guy? This is a lot of hard work and if I don't have to drink anymore then I don't have to keep coming here to draw water!

[FREEZE: This finishes Act 1. Now spend a few minutes discussing]

Q: Is this woman understanding what Jesus is talking about? No!

A: **Read John 7:37-39** where Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit and being born-again where God invades us with His living water and changes us!

This woman is confused, because she is not aware of her problem: her sin and guilt. Before she can receive this living water she must first admit that she is spiritually thirsty! That is where Jesus takes the discussion next.

[UNFREEZE: Now begin Act 2 which starts in v. 16]

Jesus and Samaritan Woman Script (Act 2)

Act 2: John 4:16-26

Jesus: Go, call your husband, and come back.

Woman: I have no husband.

Jesus: Ah! You are correct. In fact, you have had five husbands and the man you are with now is not your husband!

Woman: Whoa! Ummm...how did you know that?

[FREEZE] Q: Busted! How do you think she feels right now? Her sin has now been made known *, and you think maybe she'd be ready to receive this living water. But you will see that she dodges and changes the subject! *

Q: Isn't that what we often do when we are close to getting caught or in trouble? * Jesus knows she's doing this and will follow her down this rabbit trail, for He will still take her where she needs to go! [UNFREEZE]

Woman: Are you a prophet? Tell me, where is the correct place to worship God: Samaria or Jerusalem?

Jesus: Dear woman, those who really love God can worship anywhere, because God is spirit. Such people will worship Him in spirit and in truth. The Father is seeking **any and all people** to worship Him in spirit and truth.

Woman: Well, I don't know about that. I know the Christ is coming. When He comes He will answer this question.

Jesus: Yeah, I know, that's me. I am the Christ! Are you ready to listen?

[FREEZE: This finishes Act 2. Discuss and continue the lesson]

CHECKMATE! She is now face to face with the One she says she has been waiting for. She is now face to face with the One that knows her sin! The bad news of her guilt is undeniable. Will she now surrender? Let's see!