

Reflection Questions for the Story of the Samaritan Woman at the Well

There are several different aspects of the story of the Samaritan woman at the well which are interesting to reflect upon. Below are some questions for different ways to look at this story. These can be used to help facilitate group discussion or for starters for journaling.

The Gospel Reading for the Samaritan Woman at the Well

First read the gospel of the discussion between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well:

[John 4:5-42 or John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42](#) (Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman at the well) – the Gospel Reading for the [3rd Sunday of Lent – Year A](#)

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" – For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink, ' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

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[Jesus said to her, “Go call your husband and come back.”

The woman answered and said to him, “I do not have a husband.”

Jesus answered her, “You are right in saying, ‘I do not have a husband.’ For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true.”]

The woman said to him, “Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.”

Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.”

The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything.”

Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one speaking with you.”

[At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, “What are you looking for?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, “Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?”

They went out of the town and came to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat.”

But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

So the disciples said to one another, “Could someone have brought him something to eat?”

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘In four months the harvest will be here’? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. The reaper is already receiving payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work.”]

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him [because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me everything I have done.”]

When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, “We

no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.” [John 4:5-42 or John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42](#)

Reflection questions for Jesus Speaks to the Samaritan Woman at the Well

Jesus spoke to a woman and an outsider

The woman Jesus chose to interact with was a Samaritan. Samaritans were considered outsiders and were looked down on by the Jewish people. And she was a woman, and so was also looked down upon at this time.

- Who do I consider outsiders? Immigrants? Homeless? The unpopular group at school? People whose skin color or culture is different from my own?
- Am I comfortable interacting with outsiders? Would I be willing to initiate a conversation? Why or why not?
- What do I find most difficult about breaking down barriers between myself and others?
- Do I treat people of the opposite gender with respect? Or do I engage in activities which reduce them to objects?
- What are some benefits from forming relationships with people who are different from myself?

Jesus offers eternal satisfaction to the woman at the well

Jesus told the woman at the well that if she drank of what he offered that she would never thirst. Only God can truly satisfy our desires. Jesus offers himself to us at every mass in the Eucharist.

- How do I spend my time, money, and energy? Do these things bring me lasting satisfaction or temporary pleasure? Think about things like social media, sports, prayer, clothes, food, digital media, recreational activities, friendships, family, etc.
- Do I prefer to be with people who draw me closer to God or those who make it harder for me to grow in relationship with God? Why?
- How often do I spend time in prayer each day? What might make my prayer life more satisfying?
- What do I experience at Mass? How does my participation at Mass influence my experience?

The woman at the well spreads the good news to her neighbors

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After her encounter with Jesus, the woman at the well goes to her neighbors and enthusiastically tells them about him.

- Am I willing to talk about my faith with my friends and neighbors?
- What are the main things I want others to know about Jesus?
- If I talk about Jesus, am I willing to share my personal stories or do I prefer to speak more generally? Why?
- What makes it difficult to talk to my friends about Jesus? What do I fear? Why?

More resources:

[Additional Lesson Plans and Reflections](#)

[3rd Sunday of Lent – Year A](#)

[Death does not have the final word](#)