



## ***LIFE LESSONS FROM THE LADIES***

### **The Samaritan Woman: Lesson 13**

For some reason, this morning I woke up in a funk. You know the feeling. I don't know why, nothing dramatic happened, no unkind words were said in my house. Just blah. If I had to try to explain it better, I guess I would say I was feeling insignificant, worthless, and just plain ol' sad. When I sat down at my computer to write, asking the Lord to show me which woman of the Bible to write about, He took me right to the Samaritan woman. She wasn't on my list of women to discuss, but I felt the leading of the Holy Spirit loud and clear. As I started reading her story in John 4, my heart was filled with joy. (Some tears too!) He knew I was feeling small and insignificant, like our lesson 13 woman. He knew I was parched and needed a drink of Living Water! The Samaritan woman's story is amazing, and her life is transformed after her encounter with Jesus. Her life literally screams with lessons for us to learn! He loves us incredibly, despite our past. He lifts the burdens of sin and shame from our lives. He transforms us by His grace. We are not defined by our sin. Because He is significant, our lives matter! He will demolish prejudices and knock down walls that divide us. He will break down barriers to reach us. This is the God who loves ... me! Little, insignificant, feeling-worthless me. And you! Max Lucado wrote, "The story of the Samaritan woman resonates with us because it is our own. We see her face when we look into the mirror. We know why she was avoiding people ... because we do the same thing. We know what it's like to have no one sit by us at the cafeteria. We've wondered what it would be like to have one good friend. We've been in love, and we wonder if it's worth the pain to do it again. And like the Samaritan woman, we have also wondered where in the world God is." I can relate to this woman.

I love how we can run to the Word to better understand how wonderful God is, as well as to find answers to our questions, comfort for our pain, encouragement for our despair, and peace to our souls. Patsy Clairmont said, "An ongoing source of oil for my lamp are the Scriptures, which are filled with light-giving counsel. The Word is often a flood-light searching into the corners of my heart. It fuels the passion of my faith. It's the wick that allows the light of Christ to be seen in my life. It steadies my faith and adds to my hope, as I wait on tiptoes for the

skies to split open, the trumpets to shout, and heaven's light to immerse the earth." Let's get on our tiptoes! He wants to speak to us!

### **First Day**

1. Read John 4:1-42. Observe and list the facts you find. Who is the story about? What is taking place? When? Where?
2. From verses 1-3, why did Jesus leave Judea?
3. What do you know about the Samaritans? Who are they? Read 2 Kings 17:24-41 and summarize the facts you find.
4. Why are her gender and nationality so significant to the story? What are some other facts you find significant?
5. Why do you think Jesus "needed" to go through Samaria? Why does the Holy Spirit put that sentence in the text?
6. How does that speak to your own heart right now?

7. What are your initial thoughts on this chapter?

That's all for today. I remember the day that I believe Jesus "needed" to go through a small home in La Mirada to meet a girl sitting on the floor ... me. A girl lost, confused, afraid of the future, and desperately in need of a Savior. Hallelujah!

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst again. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:13-14

### **Second Day**

**Work on your memory verse. Hide it in your heart!**

It's crucial to understand that the Samaritans were a mixed race, part Jew and part Gentile, that grew out of the Assyrian captivity of the ten northern tribes in 727 BC. After Assyria conquered Israel, the Jews that survived began to marry Gentiles in the surrounding nations. These racially mixed Jews were the Samaritans, and "pure" Jews wanted nothing to do with them and would not allow them to worship in the Temple. Rejected by the Jews, the Samaritans established their own temple and religious services on Mount Gerizim.

As you read the story, imagine yourself as the Samaritan woman. What was she feeling? It's been said that we have a basic human need to belong, to feel loved, and to feel valued. I agree with that. This woman was no different. Jesus had a plan and "needed" to meet this lonely, discarded, Samaritan woman, who just "happened" to be at the well. 😊

1. Read John 4:1-14. Why was Jesus sitting by the well?
2. What time of the day was it?

Liz Curtiss Higgs wrote, "By Roman time, it was six o'clock in the evening; by Jewish time, twelve noon. Since most women went to the well at eventide and there wasn't a water pot in sight yet, we'll stick with the conventional reading and assume it was noon, the heat of the day."

3. The woman wanders up to the well where Jesus sat. Why do you think she went in the heat of the day, rather than in the morning with all the other women?

4. It appears that she was avoiding the “water drawing hour.” How can you relate to her desire to do that?
  
5. Do you think she gets nervous when she sees Him there?
  
6. What does Jesus ask her?
  
7. According to verse 9, how does she respond? Why is she so surprised He’s talking to her?
  
8. John is the only Gospel writer to include this story, but he doesn’t even give us her name. Any thoughts on why not?

I know it was pretty much counter-culture for Jesus to talk to her since she’s a woman and a Samaritan, but Max Lucado adds an additional thought. He wrote, “Jesus may have sensed her discomfort at seeing Him there and asked for water. But she was too streetwise to think that all He wanted was a drink. She wanted to know what He really had in mind. After all, when was the last time a man had spoken to her with respect?”

9. She hadn’t expected to see Him there, but He expected to see her. He looked at her directly. He met her one-on-one. How do you think she was feeling right about now?
  
10. How did Jesus respond in verse 10? How does Jesus begin to shift the conversation to a spiritual plane?

I love this because Jesus met each of us one-on-one, just like He met her. He looked at our hearts directly, seeing our need for Living Water to fill our souls. Psalm 107:9 says, “He satisfies the longing soul.” Sometimes we don’t even realize we’re longing until we are willing to take a drink!

11. She seems to be observant ... and bold. Explain her answer in verses 11-12.

12. She called Him a “Jew” in verse 9. What does she call Him in verse 11?

Jesus knew she was parched with thirst in both body and spirit. Her first issue was easy to solve, but the second problem needed to be brought out into the open. Jesus begins to masterfully lead the conversation to reveal her deeper need.

13. Jesus knew this woman’s heart, through and through. How does that truth encourage you? What is your deepest need and/or longings? How are you hurting inside? God sees it, just like He saw Hagar in the wilderness. (Remember, she named Him, “The God Who Sees”?) He “needs” to meet with you right now!

### **Third Day**

#### **Work on memorizing your verse!**

1. Read John 4:1-26 again. In verse 13-14, Jesus tells her about water that will quench her thirst forever. What’s He talking about? Read John 7:37-38 if you’re not sure!
  
2. After she asks for the water, Jesus tells her to go get her husband. How does she respond? Which then leads Jesus to say ...?

The woman now calls Him a prophet in verse 19. She could tell there was something different about Him. Her understanding of Him was certainly evolving. It would’ve been fun to see the look on her face when He said that about her husbands, though. Talk about a shock!

### 3. Why do you think Jesus said that about her husbands? For what purpose?

Many believe that because this woman had 5 husbands, she must have been a harlot or something of that nature. I don't believe that at all. It doesn't say what happened to all of them, but life was very difficult at that time, so they all could have died by warfare, famine, disease, or various other ways. It seems excessive but wasn't illegal. It was hard to live as a widow and support yourself, so it wasn't uncommon to try to secure another husband. Although I'm sure she was the talk of the town. Five husbands? Did they call her "black widow" behind her back? But she was not married to the one she was presently living with, so we know that now she was living in the sin of fornication. There's no speculating on that one. I wonder why Jesus said that. Did He just want her to know He was all-knowing? Did He want her to know He didn't have carnal motives for talking to her? Hmmm ... I also believe He had stirred her mind and heart, and now was working on her conscience. She needed to see her sin because there is no conversion without conviction.

Jesus was being so nice to her, ignoring every reason He "shouldn't" talk to her. He moved right past all the barriers, like a man stepping over a dog in the path. Perhaps she was even getting comfortable with the conversation. And then, I bet she thought, does He really have to talk about this? We're having a great conversation and He has to bring up my sin? But notice she doesn't try to lie, she owns it. He wasn't lecturing her or pointing His finger at her. He was looking for honesty and He got it.

### 4. What question does she pose to Jesus in verse 20? Why?

People have lots of opinions on why she asked Him this question. The typical thought is that she was throwing out a "red herring" or trying to divert the attention from the main point. Often when we try to take someone down a spiritual path, they veer off toward "religion" or some weird argument to get us off track. Perhaps to get the conversation off of herself. It's said that it's always easier to talk about church than to talk about Christ. Did He simply just strike a nerve? Max Lucado (Sorry guys, I love his writings!) makes an interesting point that I hadn't thought of. He said her question about the place of worship actually revealed her search for the presence of God. He sees her as someone who was honestly seeking to find God. I hope that's true. He wrote, "The Samaritan woman lived in a world where the exterior was elevated higher than the interior. Her physical appearance, her physical relationships with men, the physical place she worshipped ... all these things are what others judged, because that's what they thought mattered the most. But Jesus saw things differently. He saw past her exterior and through her relationships with men – and He rebuked the worshippers who were caught up

with WHERE they worshipped instead of WHOM they worshipped. Jesus didn't come to condemn people's exteriors but to transform their interiors. He was in search of worshippers who had interiors soft enough for this transformation. The Samaritan woman's humble honesty and search for God revealed that she was ready for this transformation. Little did she know that her heart was primed for true worship -- a worship led by the Spirit of Jesus and fixed on His truth."

5. Jesus exposed her sin and brought it into the light so she could find healing and transformation. Is there something He's trying to "bring to light" in your life? Are you ready to be honest?
  
6. Do you ever try to divert attention or ignore the Spirit when He is trying to speak to your heart about something? How?
  
7. Jesus is beginning to break down the walls that would keep her from coming to Him. Are there some walls He's trying to break down in your life that keep you from coming into His presence more consistently?
  
8. Read verses 21-24. Who is the Father seeking?
  
9. She didn't know much, but she knew one important thing; that the Messiah was coming and He would reveal the secrets of our hearts. What does He reveal to her in verse 26? Why is this so amazing? Why is this the most important phrase in the entire chapter?
  
10. Jesus didn't do that very often! Of all the people He could've chosen to personally receive such a revelation, He chose an outcast, a 5-time divorcee, an unimportant Samaritan. Why is this so significant??



She left behind the jug that had caused the sag in her shoulders. She left behind the burden she brought. Suddenly the shame of the tattered romances disappeared. Suddenly the insignificance of her life was swallowed by the significance of the moment. ‘God is here! God has come! God cares ... for me!’ That’s why she forgot her water jar. That’s why she ran to the city. That’s why she grabbed the first person she saw and announced her discovery: ‘I just talked to a man who knows everything I ever did ... and He loves me anyway!’ The disciples offered Jesus some food. He refused it—He was too excited! He had just done what He does best. He had taken a life that was drifting and given it direction. He was exuberant! ‘Look!’ He announced to the disciples, pointing at the woman who was running to the village. ‘Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us and are ready now for reaping.’ Who could eat at a time like this?”

4. Write your thoughts on the above paragraph!
  
5. Read John 4:39-42. Summarize the rest of the story. How did God use the Samaritan woman in His plan to win the world?
  
6. The woman was so excited about what Jesus had done that she couldn’t wait to tell everyone about Him. When was the last time you were that excited about the Lord? What keeps you from sharing what Jesus did, and continues to do for you, with people?
  
7. Often we think we don’t know anything to share with people. How simple was her testimony?

We know that Jesus is the Living Water, but we must be willing to drink. The Samaritan woman allowed Jesus to confront her with her sin, see who she was inside, then allowed Him to love her and change her, filling her with truth and grace. She allowed that water to pour in, then bubble over to others.

8. Are you bubbling over with Living Water, or do you feel like you're parched in a dry land? Why? What can you do about it? How can drinking deeply of His Word refresh us?

I love this woman. I love how excited she was to meet the Messiah, and I love how Jesus went out of His way to cross her path. She had sinned, she got saved by drinking of the water Jesus offered her, and then she shared the Good News, rushing into the city to spread His message. We have sinned, which is the clear message of Romans 3:23. We can be saved if we drink of that same Living Water (John 4:13-14, 7:37-38), and we, too, are called to share the Good News (Romans 10:14). See? We are her; she is us! See you tomorrow!

### **Fifth Day**

**Write out your verse by memory.**

Because we are talking about Samaritans, and because I LOVE this story so much, I feel like we would be remiss if we didn't look at the Good Samaritan and the lessons we learn from it that relate to our Samaritan woman.

1. Read Luke 10:25-37. Please summarize this parable and explain it in your own words. Why did the man ask this question? What is the overriding lesson we learn from this story?
  
2. Why would it be unheard of for this Samaritan to do what he did? What risks was he taking? What cultural differences did they have?

3. Who were the men that just passed by? Why do you think they didn't stop?
  
4. Write a "modern-day" version of this story.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. According to Jesus, who is our neighbor?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Which character in the story do you think represented you today? Usually?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What kind of barriers and walls do we still find within the walls of the church at times?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Is there someone you find difficult to see as your neighbor?

Max Lucado said, "Neighborliness is not defined by where we live but how we love. Our neighbor is not just the person in the next house but the one who needs our help. Christians have no excuse for prejudice. The prejudice of pagans can be explained, but in the case of a Christian, there is no explanation. No justification. We will never cross a cultural barrier greater than the one Jesus did. He learned our language, lived in our world, ate our food ... but most of all, took on our sins."

9. What did Jesus tell the man in Luke 10:37? Is there someone Jesus is telling you to love?



