

Lent 03 Year A

The Samaritan Woman at the Well

John 4:5-42

You will need to set up the room.

Slowly bring the Jesus figure to the well. Stop at the well and wait for a little while.

Jesus and his special friends had been walking a long way. They were only part way on their trip and were thirsty, hungry and tired. They were walking through Samaria, a place that was unfriendly. When they found a well they stopped. They were about a mile and a half from a town.

Point to the well

This well was a very deep hole with water at the bottom. Its water was warm and tasted muddy. Jesus sat down and his disciples went into a nearby town to find food. Jesus was alone. He couldn't reach into the well for water because it was so deep.

Bring the woman, carrying her bucket, to the well. Be sure to add shock to the woman's voice. Have her pace and look behind her to see who might be watching.

A woman who wasn't liked in her home town because of some of the wrong things she had done, came to get water from this well. She went to this well because she could be alone. She was surprised to see Jesus. In those times men and women didn't speak to each other outside their homes.

Point to Jesus. He will be speaking to a woman kindly.

"I'm thirsty," said Jesus. "Would you get me a drink of water?"

Point to the woman. Sound surprised.

The woman was surprised. "I'm surprised you are talking with me."

Point to Jesus. Cup your hands and raise your eyes to heaven.

"If you knew who it was talking with you, you would have asked me for clear, fresh, cool, bubbling spring water."

Point to the woman. The woman is doubtful.

"You don't have a bucket to draw water. And anyway, the well is very deep. Where will you get this bubbling spring water?"

Point to the well and then look up to heaven.

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. You will never be thirsty again if you drink the water that I can give.” “The water I give will become in you a spring of gushing fresh water that will give you eternal life.”

Point to the woman and smile. She doesn't believe Jesus. Almost in jest she says.

“All right, then give me this water so I won't ever get thirsty again. Then I won't have to come back to this well again.”

Point to Jesus.

Jesus then told her some of the bad things she had done. She felt sad but not embarrassed. She now believed that Jesus wasn't an ordinary person, but someone special.

Point to the woman

The woman was very sad. She wanted to know where she should go ask for forgiveness and worship God. She thought of two places that had buildings where people went miles away.

Point to Jesus.

“The time has now come when you don't need to go to special buildings. You must worship God in Spirit and in truth. That is the kind of people God the Father is looking for.”

The woman asks Jesus

“I know the Messiah, the one who will be sent from God, is coming. He will tell us all things.”

Jesus is quiet and with authority.

Jesus said, “I am he. You don't have to wait any longer.”

The disciples return from their trip into town to buy food.

The disciples returned. They were very surprised to find Jesus talking to a woman. His disciples wanted Jesus to eat. They knew he must be very hungry because they had walked very far.

Have the woman go back to the village and talk to others there.

The woman went back to the village and told the people who she had found.

Point to Jesus. He is speaking to his disciples.

I already have food you don't know anything about.

Point to his disciples

Jesus' Disciples wondered who had given Jesus food. They wondered if the woman had given him food.

Point to Jesus

"My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Don't you see the work? Don't you understand?"

Bring many villagers to listen to Jesus.

Many came from the town where the woman lived to listen to Jesus. They were excited by what he said. They asked him to stay with them. Jesus stayed two days with them. Many believed Jesus was the one sent from God because of his teaching and sharing with them. When he left, they said to one another, "We know for sure, He is the Savior of the world."

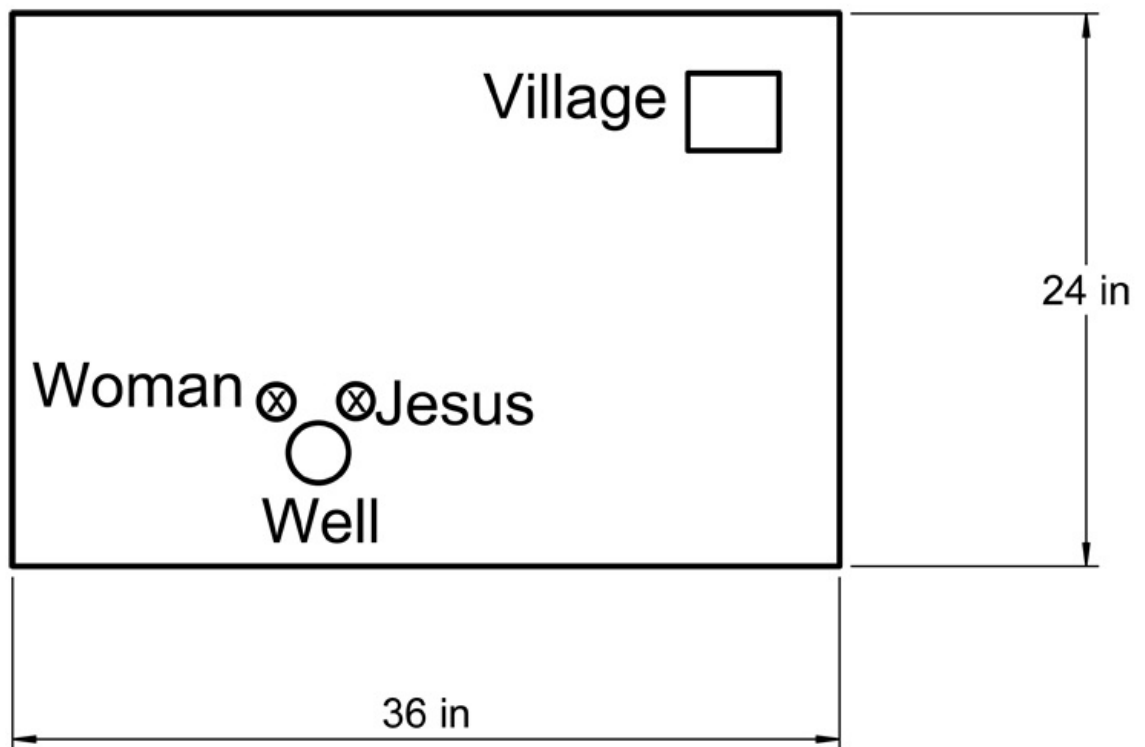
Responding to God's Word: Wondering Together

- I wonder how it feels to be disliked?
- I wonder what it is like to be thirsty?
- I wonder if we are ever thirsty for more than water or hungry for more than food?
- I wonder how water can come gushing out of us because of Jesus?
- I wonder how Jesus gives "special water" that makes people different inside?
- I wonder what Jesus food was like when he did the will of his Father who sent him?
- I wonder if you have ever had this special water?
(You may need to help the children remember their baptism.)
- I wonder what the woman said when she went back to tell others?
- I wonder how the village people felt when Jesus taught them about God?

Materials

1. Figures of :
 - Jesus
 - Samaritan Woman (with bucket) A bucket at that time was a folded leather bucket with a long cord that was used to lower the leather bucket.
 - Several Disciples
 - A group of Villagers
2. Blocks or other ways to represent:
 - Jacob's Well - the well was about 1 ½ miles from the village
 - Village
3. A Story Blanket. If possible, choose a color for sand.

CHILDREN



LEADER

John 4:5-42

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, (SIGH'-khar) near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.¹) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that 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 have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living² water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no 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 see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these 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 Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

¹ This feud had existed for over 400 years. Jesus could have traveled another way to avoid the Samaritans, but that would have doubled the normal three days that it took to walk from near Jerusalem to the Sea of Galilee.

² "Living" refers to stream water that is flowing and bubbling.