



The Woman At The Well

John 4:1-26

Big Idea: God has made each one of us with a longing to be known by him and loved by him that can only be met by coming to Jesus.

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Instructions

This story needs to be memorised. When the story has been memorised, practise in front of a mirror and work out the appropriate hand and body movements to enhance the retelling of the story.

Requirements

- Storyteller

Script

The Samaritans and the Jews did not get on.

They would not speak to each other.

They would not eat with each other.

If they saw each other on the same road they'd cross the street to avoid one another.

But one day Jesus - a Jew, met a woman - a Samaritan.

This woman had come to get some water from the town's well.

But she had not come in the cool of the morning, when all the other women had come.

She came in the middle of the day.

When the sun was very hot.

And she came alone.

Jesus looked at the woman and asked, "Will you give me a drink of water?"

The woman was shocked!

Jesus was a Jew.

He was not only speaking to her but asking her for a drink!

Jesus smiled and said, "If you knew who I am you would've asked me for living water."

The woman was confused.

Jesus had nothing in his hand to get water out of the well.

And the well was very, very deep.

Jesus continued, "Everyone who drinks the water from this well - they will get thirsty again. They will need to come again and again to get water. But the water I offer you - well you'll never get thirsty again. This living water will well up and give you life that goes on forever."

The woman stopped and looked at the water in her jar.

Then she thought about the water Jesus offered - she wanted his water.

She'd never have to come and get water from the well again!

Jesus smiled at the woman and said, "Go call your husband."

The woman hung her head, "I have no husband."

Jesus looked straight at her and said, "You're right in saying that you have no husband. In fact you have five husbands and the one you are with now is not your husband."

The woman couldn't believe it.

How did Jesus know all these things about her?

The woman dropped her jar - her water ran everywhere - and she raced back into the town.

And she told everyone she met, "Come and see the man who knows everything I've ever done. Could he be the King God promised would come?"

(pause)

We know what it's like to be thirsty - that's why we cry out for water.

But did you know God has made each one of us thirsty for him?

It's not like we want to drink God.

But we all long for God to know us and love us.

And like this woman, instead of going to God, we go to other things.

We fill our lives with things, but not the best thing.

Children, we will only be truly happy when we come to God through Jesus.

Because only then will we be known by God and loved by God.

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9. The Woman At The Well

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Big Idea: God has made each one of us with a longing to be known by him and loved by him that can only be met by coming to Jesus.

Game: Fill The Jug Relay

Warning: *never leave water unattended. If the weather is not warm, substitute water with something inexpensive like rice.*

Need:

- Clear open space outdoors (if using water)
- Plastic jug, all the same size, one per team
- Plastic cup, all the same size, one per team
- Plastic bucket, all the same size, one per team – all filled with water to the same level
- Whistle

Instructions:

- Divide into even teams.
- Mark a line on each jug at the same height.
- The aim is to be the first team to fill the jug to that line.
- Place a jug at the front of the line and the team's bucket filled with water opposite the team some distance away.
- Blow whistle.

- The child first in line runs with team cup to team bucket, fills cup and runs and pours water into team jug - then hands team cup to second child in line, who does the same.
- Continue until the team fills the jug to the line.
- Team sits once this has happened.
- First team to fill the jug to the line wins.

Conclusion:

- In the days when Jesus walked on this earth, people did not have taps in their homes.
- If they wanted a drink they had to walk to a well.
- A well was a deep hole in the ground.
- They then had to drop a bucket into the well and pull the bucket up.
- It was hard work.
- Most women went in the morning when it was cool.
- But the woman in today's story went in the middle of the day when it was hot.
- She went then because people didn't like what she'd done.
- And so she had to go during the day, when it was very, very hot.
- And one day she met Jesus and her life changed forever.

Introductory Activity: How Well Do You Know Us?

Need:

- Photographs of leader (as an infant, as a child, first day of school, as a teenager) each numbered and displayed
- Memorabilia from childhood (favourite toy, medals, trophies, certificates - with names covered)
- One story of each leader about something that happened in his/her childhood (give each story a title to make it easier for children to record)
- Design an activity sheet with the names of the leaders down one column and other columns where children can indicate which photographs, memorabilia and stories go with which leader. Copy one per child.
- Clipboard
- Pencil, one per child

Instructions:

- Children are given time to move around to view photographs and memorabilia and record which leader they think they belong to.
- One leader then reads out all stories and children record which leader they think that story belongs to.

- Leaders then move around collecting photos and memorabilia that belong to them.
- Then reveal which story is theirs as well.
- Children get one point for each item matched correctly.
- See who knows their leaders well.

Conclusion:

- We all long to be known and loved.
- For someone to know us - what we love, what we don't love, what we're good at, what we're afraid of...
- And to be loved just as we are.
- God has made us with a longing to be known and loved.
- He has made each one of us with a longing to be known by him and loved by him.
- It's only when we come to Jesus that we can be known and loved by God.

Introductory Activity: One Thing You Don't Know

Need:

- Clear open space
- Each leader writes down one thing about themselves that no one in the room would know (something that's suitable for children)

Instructions:

- One leader reads out a description and a child volunteers to choose which leader it's describing by handing that leader the paper.
- Repeat until all descriptions have been allocated.
- **Note:** some leaders may be given more than one description and some leaders may receive none.
- Leader, in turn, and reveal their secret and collect (if applicable) the correct paper.

Conclusion:

- Isn't it fascinating what we've just learnt about our leaders?
- Who knew... (add in an interesting fact from one or two leaders)?
- We know each other, but then again we never fully know each other.
- God has made each one of us with a longing to be known.
- To be known and loved by God himself.
- In John 4, Jesus meets a woman.
- Jesus knows everything about her.
- She had lots of husbands, but the thing she needed was to be known and loved by God.

- And that's what we need.
- And the only way that can happen is if we first come to Jesus.

Singing

See page 5 for song suggestions. Sing 2/3 songs about being known by God and loved by God, and knowing God because of Jesus.

Memory Verses

John 8:12 (see page 12 for instructions on how to teach it)

John 3:16

Purchase the audio track of this verse here <http://bit.ly/jn-3-16>

Small Group Time

Need:

- Copy of the booklet from last week titled, Who Is Jesus? One booklet per child. Send booklets home today.
- Brainstorming sheet on the titles of Jesus from previous weeks.
- Jug of water, one per group
- Plastic cups, one per child
- Set of coloured markers or pencils
- Set of International Children's Bibles (ICB)

Icebreaker (select from options below):

- Can you remember the last time you were really, really thirsty?
- What's one thing no one in this group knows about you?

Read John 4:4-6

Booklets:

- Open up booklets to the page with the title, The Woman At the Well John 4:3-42 two overlapping circles with the words Jesus and Woman written, one in each circle.
- Where the circles overlap, write down all the things that are the same for this woman and Jesus (i.e. tired, hot, hungry, thirsty).

Reflection:

- Jesus made the world.
- He became a human and was born into the world he'd made.
- But he didn't stop being God.
- He did however start being human.
- Jesus got tired... he got hot... he became hungry... just like you.
- Stop and think - Jesus made you - then he became like you - and he did that for you.
- How does it make you feel?

Read John 4:7-9

- Think about the things that are different between Jesus and this woman and write down all the differences. (i.e. in Jesus circle write: God, Jew, man... in the Woman circle write: not God, Samaritan, woman)

Note: this passage is long, so see if children know the answers to the questions below from what they heard in the earlier story. If not, read relevant sentences from John 4:9-15 to help them.

- What did Jesus say that surprised the woman?
(he asked her for a drink, he was a Jew and she was a Samaritan, he offered her water that would take away her thirst forever)
- What did the woman think Jesus was offering her?
(water you could drink that would magically make you never be thirsty again, water that meant she'd never have to go to the well again)

Activity:

- When we get thirsty, what do we do?
- That's right, we drink water.
- Who is thirsty now?
(pour water into cups for children to drink)
- Once we drink, we're not thirsty anymore.

Think It Through:

- What do you think Jesus was talking about?
(Jesus was talking about our thirst for God himself, Jesus was using picture language to describe how we need God more than we know it)
- We don't drink God. But we do long for him. And we won't be fully happy until we are God's. When we become a child of God we are known by him and loved by him. And that's the best thing ever! So how do we become God's child?
(if you know Jesus then you know God)

Add to the woman's circle in booklets: needs God.

Note: this passage is long, so see if children know the answers to the questions below from what they heard in the earlier story. If not, read relevant sentences from John 4:16-18, 25-26 to help them.

- What did Jesus say to the woman to make her think that Jesus may be the Messiah (the Christ), God's promised King?
(Jesus knew all about her life, how many husbands she'd had, he knew things that were impossible for him to know unless he was God)

Note for leaders: the woman came to the well in the heat of the day because she was an outcast in the town. She'd been married and divorced five times and was living with a man.

Revision Activity:

- Look at the brainstorming activity on the titles of Jesus (last page of booklets).
- Was 'Messiah' or 'Christ' one of the titles you recorded for Jesus?
- If not, add it to your list.

Note: this passage is long, so see if children know the answers to the questions below from what they heard in the earlier story. If not, read relevant sentences from John 4:28-29 to help them.

- What did the woman do?
(she went and told everyone about Jesus)

Read John 4:32 (optional)

- What did the people in the town say to the woman?
(they believed when she told them, then they believed because they heard Jesus themselves, they knew Jesus is the Saviour of the world)

Revision Activity:

- Look at the brainstorming activity on the titles of Jesus (last page of booklets).
- Was 'Saviour of the world' one of the titles you recorded for Jesus?
- If not, add it to your list.

Conclusion:

- We all get thirsty.
- And so we all drink water.
- We all want to be known by God.
- And we all want to be loved by God.
- There is only one way that will happen.
- If we believe in Jesus.
- Then we'll be known by God and loved by God.

Application (select from options below):

- Do you know that you are known by God and loved by God?
- How do you feel knowing that God, who made the world and everyone in it, knows you and loves you?

Send booklets home today.

Prayer Time

Talk to God about how thankful you are that God knows everything about you and loves you dearly.

Pray about one thing you've learnt or been reminded of this term from John's gospel. Look over group brainstorming activity on the titles of Jesus to help children remember.

Craft: Clay Or Dough Jar

Warning: *check for allergies before doing this activity.*

Need:

- Air dry modelling clay or dough
- Disposable plastic plate, one per child

Instructions:

- Model a jar from clay or dough, similar to the one the woman would've carried, to show the children.
- Encourage children to make their own clay jar.
- Talk to the children about how this woman had no tap in her home. She had to go every day in the hot sun to collect and carry water. And water is very heavy. But once she'd met Jesus and even though she still needed to go and fetch water each day, her life changed forever.