**Live in Community**



Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Expect the Unexpected**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. ([Proverbs 3:5–6](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Pr3.5-6))

*We all make plans—plans for where we’re going and what we want to do. But life is more often a story of unexpected interruptions. Our faith helps us to recognize God’s hand at work in unanticipated ways. By faith we learn to embrace life’s interruptions as the place God so often does miraculous things. We learn to respond with compassion and faith when things seem impossible.*

**Session Overview**

**Allow for Redirection**

**Biblical Encounter:** A Woman’s Life Is Changed at a Well ([John 4:5–30](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.5-30))

**Outcome:** Welcome God’s radical redirection of your life story.

*In this session, Jesus unexpectedly interrupts a woman’s daily trip to the well. This interruption proves to be more than just a chance encounter. Instead, in a divine moment Jesus offers the woman an opportunity for a radical redirection in her life. Welcoming this new direction, the woman’s life is changed forever.*

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| First time leading *Live* for Adults? Check out the [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf). |

To access session content and videos from a computer, visit: [BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

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| **QUESTION**  When was the last time you shopped for a specific item and ended up with something else? What unplanned item(s) did you buy? |

You’ve probably asked yourself this question as you unpacked a shopping bag or opened a shipping box : *How did I end up with all these items? I only intended to buy one thing!* Whether you’re an impulse buyer or not, you’ve likely walked into a store with a list and walked out with more than you planned. Maybe your favorite treat or the latest gadget caught your eye at the checkout line. Or you searched for something you needed online and ended up choosing all the items the site said were frequently bought together. Maybe you went to the grocery store on an empty stomach. In your hunger, there’s no telling what you unintentionally threw into the shopping cart. No doubt, you grabbed more items and spent more money than you intended.

It’s funny how our spiritual journeys can sometimes feel a lot like the shopping experience described above. Many times, we think we have life completely figured out and know exactly what we need. Then we encounter Jesus. And we discover that we’ve been focused on all the wrong things. Jesus gently shows us that what we really need is His peace, His love, His healing, and His grace.

It’s important that we give Jesus the opportunity to show us what needs to change. We need to make space for Him to redirect our life in any way that He sees fit. After all, He knows exactly what’s best for us to be truly fulfilled.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your answer to this question: Tell about a time when you accepted Jesus’ redirection in your life. What happened as a result?



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**Consider What the Bible Says**

In the Bible encounter we’re going to look at, we’ll meet a Samaritan woman on her way to draw water from the local well. Little did she know that she would unexpectedly encounter Jesus. Her simple trip for water was about to be interrupted by the One who had the power to quench the thirst in her soul.

**Did You Know?**

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| *Water wells served as some of the most important fixtures throughout the three thousand years that encompass the narratives of the children of Abraham in Israel. This Promised Land God gave to the Israelites had hard ground with little natural water. So the people relied heavily on God for the rains to fill their wells. Because water was scarce, wells became sources of power and control in the land. If someone were denied access to a well, they could be denied life itself.* |

**A Samaritan Woman Seeks Water**

Read [John 4:5–9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.5-9).

The Samaritan woman left her home that day with plans to complete a simple, ordinary task. She’d no doubt made the trip to get water many times before. As far as she knew, this journey would be like all the others. Only this time, Jesus was waiting unexpectedly by the well.

At first, the Samaritan woman seemed cautious. After all, she recognized the Man at the well was a Jew. Much animosity existed between most Jews and Samaritans. So why was He sitting there by the well? Most Jews would have gone out of their way to avoid a Samaritan. Yet, Jesus sat at the well as if He had been waiting for her to arrive. The two engaged in conversation, and Jesus asked her to give Him a drink of water. She simply asked Jesus why He would ask *her* for a drink.

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| **QUESTION**  Knowing that Samaritans and Jews had a history of tension, what do you think the woman was feeling as she approached the well? |

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| **QUESTION**  Why do you think Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for water? |

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| **QUESTION**  Imagine you were going to the well that day. How would you have responded to a stranger asking you for a drink of water in that situation? |

**A Samaritan Woman Finds Living Water**

Read [John 4:10–15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.10-15).

The Samaritan woman believed her mission that day was to retrieve physical water. But then Jesus pushed their conversation further. Jesus offered the woman a different kind of water—living water. Jesus told her this water He offered has the power to provide everlasting life. Then she would never thirst again.

In a moment, this unexpected encounter with Jesus, a Jewish stranger, changed her life forever. The Samaritan woman thought she was on a simple quest for water that day. Little did she know that Jesus was waiting to give her living water and redirect her life. The woman quickly answered Jesus with the best response: “Please, sir, … give me this water!”(verse [15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.15)).

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| **QUESTION**  Do you think Jesus had this conversation in mind before He arrived? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**  What do you think the Samaritan woman thought when Jesus engaged in deeper conversation with her? |

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| **QUESTION**  What does her immediate response to Jesus tell you about her desperate need for living water? |

**A Samaritan Woman Finds More Than Water**

Read [John 4:16–30](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.16).

Jesus didn’t just offer her living water. Jesus began to tell her things about her life that a stranger couldn’t possibly know.

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| **QUESTION**  How would you have reacted if a stranger knew things about your life like this? |

Note that Jesus didn’t treat her with disgust. He confronted her sin with love. Rather than offering her judgment, Jesus offered her the opportunity to have a new life. Rather than labeling her a sinner, Jesus called her to a life of worship. Jesus then revealed His true self to her. He was the Messiah she and others were waiting for.

The Samaritan woman could have chosen either to return home to her life of sin or to follow Jesus, the Messiah. She not only chose to welcome a new life, but she couldn’t wait to tell the world about it. Leaving her water jar beside the well, she ran back to the village to tell everyone about her experience.

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| **QUESTION**  Before her encounter with Jesus, how do you think the Samaritan woman was treated by others in her village? |

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| **QUESTION**  Does it surprise you that people listened to her and went to meet Jesus? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**  When have you seen Jesus look beyond your sin and see something greater in you? |

**Reflect**

**Welcome God’s radical redirection of your life story.**

God has a radical life redirection waiting for everyone. But if we aren’t careful, we can go through the motions of life and miss God’s best for us. If we don’t pay attention to God’s activity, we could easily overlook the life-changing path He offers us. The Samaritan woman could have ignored Jesus and gone about her day. She could have rejected His offer to quench her spiritual thirst. She could have returned home to her broken life. Instead, she took a big gulp of His life-transforming living water!

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**  How do you respond to God’s unexpected interruptions in your day? |

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| **QUESTION**  How have you personally responded to Jesus’ offer of living water? How has your response changed your life? |

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| **QUESTION**  Are you allowing Jesus to look deep into your life and speak to you about your sin? What changes has Jesus pointed out that you need to make? |

**Activate**

Meeting Jesus that day was a divine moment God used to redirect the Samaritan woman’s life. But can you imagine how different her story would have turned out if she had rejected Jesus’ offer? It would have been the greatest mistake of her life to continue in the direction her life was already headed.

The truth is that God wants you to have the same life-changing experience. God offers you the same living water Jesus offered the Samaritan woman that day. God offers you the same opportunity to change the direction of your life in big ways and small ways. And it would be tragic for you to reject His direction. How thirsty is your soul? Have you ever thought about that question? Jesus said that His living water would become a fresh, bubbling spring within you ([John 4:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.14)).

**Challenge**

Think about the three images listed below. Which of these images best describes your soul in relationship to Jesus? Take some time this week to gauge how well your soul is hydrated:

1. Drought—no evidence of living water

2. Puddle or pond—no movement of living water

3. River or spring—flowing, fresh living water

**Prayer Requests**

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| *Note any requests from the group and pray together. Also remember to pray for them during the week.* |

If you aren’t experiencing the fresh, life-giving water Jesus offers you every day, it’s time to make a change. One way to do that is through the personal devotions that have been provided as an extension of this discussion.

**Live on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: A Woman’s Life Is Changed at a Well**

Read [John 4:5–30](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.5-30).

Look back over Live in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. Plan how to complete the Activate component if you haven’t already done so. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**  How open are you to God’s radical redirection of your life? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 2: Rethink Your Current Direction**

Read [Psalm 32:8–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps32.8-11).

This passage reminds us that the Lord is the answer when we need direction in life. The Samaritan woman was stuck. Husband after husband, she just kept repeating the cycle of broken relationships. She was trapped in a life she couldn’t escape. The only thing she knew to do was keep doing what she had always done. She needed to change, but didn’t appear to know where to start. She was on a path that was destined to take her further from where she wanted to go. We can lessen sorrows like these in life when we turn to God.

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| **QUESTION**  Reflect on today’s Bible passage. What does this passage mean to you? |

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| **QUESTION**  Stop and evaluate your life. Are you going the direction God wants you to go? If not, what needs to change? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 3: Recognize God’s Redirection**

Read [Isaiah 55:6–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is55.6-11).

This Scripture reminds us that God’s perspective is different from ours. Because He is all-knowing, He can see a better path for us to follow. The Samaritan woman couldn’t see beyond her current life and choices, but God had a better plan for her. The village likely saw an outcast, but God saw a potential faithful follower and future world-changer. Jesus offered her a radical redirection. He offered her living water that would quench her thirsty soul. But only she could choose to accept what He offered.

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| **QUESTION**  How could the living water Jesus offers satisfy your soul? |

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| **QUESTION**  What radical redirection might God be leading you to right now? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 4: Respond to God’s Redirection**

Read [Psalm 25:8–10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps25.8-10).

These verses are a great reminder that God wants what’s best for us. He always knows the best path for our life. But will we respond to Him like the Samaritan woman did? “Please, sir, … give me this water!” ([John 4:15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.15))

What a powerful response! The Samaritan woman wasted no time answering Jesus’ offer of a lifetime. The Bible doesn’t tell us how many years this woman had been living a destructive lifestyle. But we know that in a moment, she desired for her life to be forever changed.

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| **QUESTION**  Make a list of the changes that God could make in your life if you gave Him the opportunity. |

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| **QUESTION**  How can you grab hold of this truth? What should you start doing? What should you stop doing? |

**Live on Your Own**

**Day 5: Reveal God’s Direction to Others**

Read [John 4:39–42](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.39-42).

We can tell from these verses that the Samaritan woman truly experienced the life-giving water Jesus offered. Her transformational encounter with Jesus made her want to tell everyone in her village about Him ([John 4:28–30](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn4.28-30)). She wanted everyone to have an opportunity to have eternal life. She had found something truly great and wanted the world to know. She was convinced that if Jesus could transform someone like her, He could transform anyone. It became her mission to help others find Him.

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| **QUESTION**  Make a list of the radical changes God has made in your life. |

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| **QUESTION**  Identify someone who would benefit from hearing about these radical changes God has made in you. Plan to share your story with that person this week. |