

STUDY 1: BUILDING TRUST. John 4:6-18.

6 Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. 7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." 16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." 17 "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

Discuss Together:

1. When has a spiritual conversation helped you grow? And when has it been unhelpful?
2. What does this dialogue between Jesus and the woman teach you about Jesus?
3. Based on the chronology of the conversation - from a drink of water to living water to her lack of a husband - why might Jesus have moved the conversation to such a personal topic?
4. What benefits do you think come from having honest personal and spiritual conversation with others? What concerns do you feel about these kinds of conversations?
5. What builds trust for you to be honest in personal and spiritual conversations? How do you help others feel safe being honest?

Going Deeper:

"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." - Jesus

- What do you think about Jesus' offer to this woman? If he could come through on this offer, would you be interested?

SUMMARY: Jesus seeks to build trust with someone who is very different from himself. There are great barriers and pain between Samaritans and Jews, as well as between men and women. God's love in Jesus empowers him to glide through these walls as if they do not exist. Like layers of an onion, Jesus moves the conversation deeper. The woman loves the conversation, and the story ends with her bringing her entire village to meet Jesus.