

PRAYER

- Thank God for accepting you despite your past. Thank Christ for accepting you into His family. Ask Him to help you show that kind of love and acceptance to others as well.
- Ask God to help you surrender something He wants you to trust Him with.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you to someone to whom you can share your encounter with Christ this week.

NOTES



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RE:NEW

WEEK 1

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

WARM-UP

- Name a person or group of people you enjoy spending time with. Why do you enjoy it?
- Was there a time someone surprised you with a kind act? Tell us about it.
- What is a movie, book, product, or event you were so excited about that you told all your family and friends about it? How did you tell them?

WORD ³⁹Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." . . . ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word.

JOHN 4:39,41

(Read also **JOHN 4:1-42.**)

Samaritans, who were of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish ethnicity, were not accepted by the Jewish community. In the same way, women were not considered important members of society. It was hard to be either a Samaritan or a woman. It was harder to be both. However, we will see how an encounter with Jesus transformed the life of a Samaritan woman from a story of rejection into a story of acceptance and bold testimony.

1 Jesus accepted the Samaritan woman despite her expectations.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) **JOHN 4:9**

The Samaritan woman wondered why Jesus would ask for a drink from her. As a Jew, He should have rejected sharing a drink with Samaritans for religious reasons. As a man, He should not have started a conversation with her. The woman's words showed that she expected this rejection from Him, but He had approached her anyway. Jesus approaches us even when we are not seeking Him or when we expect rejection because of who we are. How does this unconditional acceptance affect how we respond to Jesus?

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2 Jesus accepted the Samaritan woman despite her past.

¹⁸"... for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." . . . ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."²⁶Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he." **JOHN 4:18,25,26**

After asking her for a drink, Jesus showed that He knew the Samaritan woman had gone through multiple marriages, which made her even more of a social outcast. But when He revealed Himself to her as the Messiah whom both Jews and Samaritans hoped for, He was showing her that the Messiah accepted and welcomed her despite her past. Is there something in your past you had a challenge surrendering to God? How did you find freedom from this? Tell us about it.

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3 Like the Samaritan woman, we can share the good news despite our pasts.

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 indeed the Savior of the world." **JOHN 4:42**

The Samaritan woman had a powerful encounter with Jesus when He revealed Himself to her as the Messiah (John 4:26). It was only after she realized who He was that she spoke with conviction to the townspeople about what He had told her. These people then went on to have their own encounters with Christ, starting with her testimony. Like the Samaritan woman, our testimony should be about how Christ knows every single thing about us and our pasts, but accepts us anyway, so much that He came to save us. According to Luke 12:12, why can we confidently speak about what God has done for us despite our pasts?

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APPLICATION

- Do you believe that Jesus Christ has accepted you despite your past? Do you want to receive His love for you today?
- What area do you feel God is asking you to surrender to Him so He can show you His love and acceptance? How can you work on it this week?
- Share how an encounter with Jesus changed your life. How can you share this with a family member or friend this week?