

One Hope Community Church



Book of John Small Group Study

Chapter 4

How to effectively use this guide:

Always begin in prayer. Before opening your Bible, ask God to send His Holy Spirit to you and ask Him to reveal whatever wisdom and insights He wants you to learn.

Reflect on what you have read and take notes. The questions below are designed to help you examine the scriptures even more and provide discussion points for your meeting.

Please remember to go over the agreement below as a small group each time a new person joins your group:

- We gather to grow in relationship with each other and God.
- We trust the Holy Spirit is our guide and the one who transforms our hearts.
- Our small group is an inviting place to discuss the Bible, share life, ask questions, and seek truth while we challenge and learn from each other.
- We commit to keep confidential all personal information shared during discussion and prayer time.
- We respect each other's backgrounds, and avoid negative discussions about politics and denomination differences. We will choose love over judgment.
- We commit to completing the personal study to the best of our ability as preparation, questions, and insights are a gift to the group.
- We listen, not fix. Fixing is God's job. We own our stories. It is okay to ask for help, but if not asked for, our job is to listen, support and pray.
- We will be brief with our answers so that all members have time to share.

Your group won't get through all these questions. Select which ones you find to be the most thought provoking for your group.

Meeting Agenda

Gather / Socialize / Catch Up

Worship: All Hail King Jesus

https://youtu.be/Fdp_aRd8Nxo?si=K_5aVF2oI0oOOUQa

Read Scripture / Answer Questions

Closing prayer

Week #4 Reading Plan (October 8 - 14)

Day 1: John 4:1-15

Day 2: John 4:16-26

Day 3: John 4:27-38

Day 4: John 4:39-42

Day 5: John 4:43-54

The hatred between Jews and Samaritans can be traced back to Jacob's sons. Jacob (Israel) had 12 sons from which came the 12 tribes. Joseph was the favorite son and for that he was despised by his brothers (Genesis 37) who meant harm for him. God redeemed what was meant for harm and used the situation to bless Joseph and the entire family. In Genesis 49 when Jacob blesses his sons, he calls Joseph fruitful. The blessing was fulfilled when Joseph gave his two sons Ephraim (means "doubly fruitful") and Manasseh the fruitful land that became Samaria, the territory north of Jerusalem. The other sons of Jacob settled south of Jerusalem in Judea.

Over time, after Assyria conquered Samaria, it became a mix of Jews and Gentiles. The Samaritans believed in the God of Israel and built their temple on Mount Gerizim where their ancestors worshiped (John 4:20-23). Abraham had built an altar there (Genesis 12:6-7) as did Jacob (Genesis 33:18-20).

In the southern kingdom of Judah, the Babylonians captured the Jews living there and took them to Babylon. When the Jewish remnant returned to Judah, they rebuilt Jerusalem and the temple where they worshiped God.

The two kingdoms disagreed on where to worship (Mount Gerizim or Jerusalem). The Jews called Samaritans "half-breeds" because of their mixing with Gentiles and looked down on them.

We are not much different than Jacob's family. Where have you noticed negative or painful patterns being passed down generationally from your family of origin? How can you be part of breaking and healing those patterns?

To go through Samaria, the journey would be about a 2.5 - 3 day walk (about 70 miles). Because of the hatred Jews had for Samaritans, they avoided the area by either following the eastern route following the Jordan River to the Sea of Galilee, a 5-7 day journey, or they chose the longer western route along the Mediterranean Sea.

The fact that Jesus chose to go the route he did, may have surprised His disciples and revealed His heart and His mission. Later in Acts 1, after His resurrection, Jesus tells the apostles they will be witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in Judah and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - and ALL of Jacob's ancestors. Over and over Jesus tells of His desire for unity between His people and salvation for all people.

Jews and Samaritans worshiped the same God. Consider differences between Christian churches today. Which differences create divisions for you? How can we have unity within the Church when there are differences between churches?

Jesus asks the woman for water and begins a conversation about living water. How does this tie into His first miracle and what we learned in John 2?

In John 3:5 He said we must be born of water and Spirit. In John 4:13, Jesus spoke of never being thirsty again. There is a parallel between water and Spirit. What (or Who) is living water and what does Jesus mean by never being thirsty?

In John 4:21 Jesus says there will come a time that people will worship in spirit and in truth, not in a specific place (referring to the disagreement between the Samaritans and Jews). To worship in spirit is to worship with our hearts and to attune to the Holy Spirit. To worship in truth is to have a correct understanding of Jesus's teachings and doctrine. How does this understanding challenge you?

Jesus tells the woman the truth about her past, a truth she concealed. She went up the mountain alone, in the heat of day, not with the other women in the cool of the morning most likely because of her past and fear of judgment. Yet she runs down the mountain exclaiming her past (darkness exposed to light, the light being Jesus literally - John 1) as a testimony to knowing Jesus. Often we, too, want to conceal things yet Jesus longs to heal those things and make them into a testimony, blessing us and others. Is there a time you experienced this in your life?

In the Old Testament women were a part of all community life except for Temple priesthood. (Deuteronomy 29 and 31, Proverbs 31, Exodus 35, Ruth 2, Samuel 8, Psalm 68, 1 Samuel 1, 2 Samuel 6, Song of Solomon 2...) Between the Old Testament and New Testament, Jews began adopting Greek thoughts about women, limiting them to seclusion. It is no surprise then that the disciples were shocked at seeing Jesus alone with a Samaritan who was a woman. This woman became the first Samaritan to teach others that Jesus is the Messiah.

Knowing the break in how women were viewed between the testaments, does it surprise you, like it did the disciples that Jesus chose a revolutionary way, choosing a woman to be the first witness to Samaria? What does this say about how God views women?

Jesus speaks in word pictures to help people understand. In John 4:31-38 He talks about a harvest and compares it to planting (witnessing) and sewing (teaching) and reaping (leading people into relationship with Him). He says "4 more months" which most likely was a local proverb to point to harvest. However, the harvest also did not happen until after Passover. There is a foreshadowing of His death and resurrection, followed by Pentecost. As part of the church born at Pentecost, how do you participate in witnessing, teaching and leading? Which is most comfortable for you? How has God wired you to participate in this?

In John 4:46-54 a royal official asks Jesus to heal his son, which He does. Jesus knows the man believes because of the sign of turning water into wine. He says "unless you see signs and wonders you will never believe." It is for this reason Jesus does perform signs, to lead people to belief in Him as the Messiah. The official was able to trace back the miracle of his son living to the moment Jesus said "your son will live." Sometimes we see the miracle after it has actually happened. Have you ever traced back a miracle to see how God worked in the details along the way?