

GO DEEPER

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.

The Woman at the Well

Jesus famously surprised His disciples when he took the time to treat an unlikely person as an individual. His conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well cut across the divisions of the day. Jews and Samaritans detested one another, and women were looked down upon by men. For centuries, this encounter has spurred Christians to avoid cultural divisions and see individuals as God sees them.

Read John 4:1-42 and answer these questions:

- Although the Samaritan woman had come to draw water, there was a deeper, spiritual thirst in her soul. The Jews of the day likely downplayed any spiritually focused thinking by Samaritans, but the woman at the well demonstrated the opposite was true. **What comments did the woman at the well make that demonstrated her thoughts about spiritual matters?**
- **What signs do you find in our culture that show people's spiritual thirst?**
- In verse 7, the Samaritan woman registers her surprise that Jesus would break with cultural norms by speaking to her. **How does God use our loving, countercultural acts to create openness toward faith in Jesus?**
- Jesus' act of speaking got the woman's attention, but His words drew her toward spiritual discussion. **How do you – or how can you – use your words with others to build spiritual discussion?**
- Jesus could have walked into the town of Sychar with His disciples and began to teach a crowd. The Gospels record several accounts when He taught large crowds. **Why do you think Jesus focused on one person instead of on a crowd of people?**
- The toxic polarization discussed in this session is destroyed when we are willing to see people as individuals and have conversations with them. Others are simply on the fringes and need special attention. **Whom can you view as an individual and try to have a conversation with this week?**