

## THE WOMAN WITH A PAST

All Activity Sheets

### KEY WORDS

LOVE BELIEVE LIVES UNCONDITIONAL FORGIVE SIN PERISH ETERNAL LIFE ELECT CHANGE

### BIBLICAL REFERENCE

John 4:1-30, 39-42

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students know that Jesus loves everyone and wants to change their lives, and that they can feel his love and know that he forgives all sin

### MEMORY VERSE

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son” (John 3:16-18, NIV\*).

### PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The Samaritan woman did not fit in and she knew it. That’s why she arrived at the well at noon. At that time there were no groups of people making fun of her, pointing her out, laughing, or even ignoring her. Guilt and loneliness were her only company at that time of day. It was at the water well where she met Jesus.

Surely some of the preadolescents will feel like her: alone, displaced, without love, and without friends. They have begun a stage of their life in which they do not fit in with any particular group. They’re no longer children, but neither are they adolescents. They want more freedom, but they are not legally mature to do some things, such as driving a car or making more serious decisions.

Preadolescents face many pressures during this time of their life. In school both teachers and principals preach about “tolerance,” but in the schoolyard or the cafeteria, the dynamics between them are totally different.

Likewise, preadolescents with spiritual sensitivity can feel a great distance between themselves and God. But this lesson will help them see that there is someone who wants to destroy the barriers that separate them from God. That someone is Jesus. He can

change their life, if they'll let him.

## **BIBLICAL COMMENTARY**

### **Fences and walls**

Did you ever think about the walls and fences you know?

NOTE:

Some walls and fences are very dramatic. For example, some prisons have high walls and threatening barbed wire fences around them, and the top of exterior walls of some houses have pieces of glass of different sizes. There are differences in the buildings on the two sides of some cities that are on the border of two countries: those on one side are ruined and those on the west side are well maintained and painted. Some common fences are white in color while others are black or brown. Fences and walls can be made with wood, iron, concrete blocks, or even rocks. But all fences and walls are there to divide and separate things.

Why do people build fences and barriers? There are two different opinions. Some people will say, "We need fences and barriers to protect us from people who want to hurt us or steal our belongings." Others may argue, "It is not good to put up fences or bars; they'll think we're afraid."

People may disagree whether it is better that walls are made of wood or brick. But they must realize that there are other barriers, often invisible, that cause problems among people. Language can differentiate those from "inside" from those from "outside." Each language has some of its own unique sayings and terms. Personal attitudes of certain groups can lift barriers between people. Also, discrimination and prejudice in any form in which it occurs (for example, the color of skin, the country where one was born, gender, level of intelligence or culture, economic level, etc.) can create barriers. They get in the way, and often they seem insurmountable and difficult to overcome.

It is not good to hide behind "excuses" of a particular culture, saying, "This is the way we do this or that thing here." In the scene described in John 4, Jesus broke down two of those cultural barriers. The woman at the well asked him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (v. 9)

The way Jesus responded to the Samaritan woman broke down the barrier between "the elect" and "the rejected," as well as between men and women. Jesus did not let cultural rules prevent him from testifying to the truth of the Gospel. By reading the passage carefully, we see that Jesus never condemned the woman. He clearly described her way of life, but he never mentioned the word "sinner." Jesus started from the place where she was. With his attitude and his actions, he released her so that she could begin a new stage of her life. He also helped her see herself as someone loved by God, despite her circumstances. For that reason, she recognized Jesus as the Messiah, a new revelation for her, and could see herself as a witness of Christ, which was an extraordinary goal.

### **Meditate on the following:**

What are the invisible fences that preadolescents raise around them to keep "strangers" away?

Ask yourself as a teacher: "What are the cultural norms or prejudices that stand in my way in dealing with the real needs of the preadolescents in my group?"

### **Important words**

Unconditional love: love that has no limitations or conditions; love that cannot be won or lost. The person who decides to love without conditions does it regardless of what the other person is like or what that person did or did not do. Unconditional love does not end even if the other person does not return the same kind of love. That's the kind of love God has for us.

## **INTRODUCE THE LESSON**

### **The most important day**

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #397-A (What a Difference a Day Makes). You'll need pencils or pens for your students to write or draw what happened on the most important day of their lives. Encourage them to think about what that day was and how it changed their lives. Say: "We can all remember the most important day of our lives."

Ask the students to show their drawings and tell what happened on that day so important to them. You can bring something prepared in advance, or you could also draw your most important day.

Explain: "Just as we had a very important day in our own lives, there was a woman who also had a very special day. Today we'll

learn about the life of that woman who lived in biblical times. We'll see what happened in the most important day of her life.

## TEACH THE LESSON

### Jesus and the woman by the well (drama)

This lesson is presented as a drama. For those groups where only the teacher's notes is the only resource, two students can act out the Samaritan woman and Jesus' parts while the teacher relates the story. These two students should meet with the teacher prior to the lesson to practice their actions in the story.

If possible, before this session give copies of the drama to those who will be participating in the drama so they can read through it beforehand and be prepared. You'll need a narrator, the Samaritan woman, and Jesus.

Allow time for the group to read and act out their parts of the drama in front of the group.

NOTE:

Narrator: "Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—although, in fact, it was not Jesus who baptized. Rather it was Jesus' disciples who were baptizing. So Jesus left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

"Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from the journey. So, he sat down by the well. It was about noon.

"When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus spoke to her."

Jesus: "Will you give me a drink?"

Narrator: "His disciples had gone into the town to buy food."

Samaritan Woman: "You are a Jew and I'm a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?"

Narrator: "For Jews do not associate with Samaritans."

Jesus: "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."

Samaritan Woman: "Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 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?"

Jesus: "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 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."

Samaritan Woman: "Sir, give me this water so that I will not get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus: "Go, call your husband and come back."

Samaritan Woman: "I have no husband."

Jesus: "You are right when you say you have no husband. 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."

Samaritan Woman: "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus: "Woman, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews."

Narrator: "What Jesus was saying to the woman was that the place where a person worships is not the most important thing. The most important thing is that we worship God from the heart."

## CONNECT THE LESSON

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #397-B and #397-C. Ask volunteers to read the following passages to discover how this story ended: John 4:25-30, 39-42.

Then ask them to answer the questions that appear there:

The Samaritan woman had several problems. What were they? (She was a Samaritan. She was a woman without many rights. She was a sinner.)

Why do you think Jesus talked to her? (Jesus loved all people unconditionally, no matter who the person was, what that person was like or had done.)

The disciples were away buying food. What do you think they would have done if they had been there when Jesus and the woman started talking? (Maybe they would have been amazed, been angry at the woman, or questioned Jesus.)

In what way did Jesus bring about a change in the life of the Samaritan woman? (Jesus told her about the love of God. Although the Bible does not tell us about the changes she experienced, we can say that the change in her life was very great. She ended up testifying about Jesus to others, and she did it with great enthusiasm.)

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = not important and 10 = very important), how would you rate the change in the woman's life, and why?

## PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Write the memory text on cards. Since this is a very long text, it may be difficult for some of the students. But if you write the phrases separately on various cards, at the end of the unit, the preadolescents will probably know it by memory. In this unit there are four lessons. Each lesson will repeat the same memorization activity for part of the text. Using cards, write one phrase on each card:

1st session: For God so loved the world / that he gave his one and only Son, / that whoever believes in him / shall not perish / but have eternal life.

2nd session: For God did not send his Son / into the world/ to condemn the world,/ but to save the world / through him.

3rd session: Whoever believes in him / is not condemned, / but whoever does not believe / stands condemned already / because they have not believed / in the name of God's one and only Son. / (John 3:16-18)

4th session: Practice the whole text. Practice several times playing different ways:

Getting in a circle and passing a ball or bag full of seeds from student to another, while repeating the parts of the text.

March around the room or the building and sing to the rhythm of a rap or hip-hop song.

Have competitions between girls and boys.

Mix the parts to assemble the text as if it were a puzzle.

Write the words on the board and delete them while they learn the text.

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #397-D. Ask the students to comment on the last activity sheet for this session. Tell them to observe the differences that exist between all the people in the drawing. Give the opportunity to discuss as a group. Remind your students that God loves all people, no matter what their race, social position, economic level, or sins they have committed in the past.

## WRAP-UP

### Pray

Finish by praying for your students to be kind and patient with people from other cultures and with everyone who is different from them.

### Encourage

Say, "We're all created by God, and he loves us all equally. Jesus loved a sinful Samaritan woman. He left us the best example to follow, so we need to imitate him."

### Invite

Tell the students something interesting about the next session to encourage them to attend. Remind them to welcome visitors.