

SHE LEFT HER JAR



BIG IDEA:

Jesus goes to the people everyone else avoids and invites us to go too.

SCRIPTURE:

Mark 1:38 (CEV) *"Jesus replied, 'We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come.'"*

OPENING HOOK (8 MIN)

WHO DO YOU AVOID?

ASK:

- Who are the people at school others tend to avoid?
- Is there a part of your town you've been told to avoid?
- Have you ever crossed to the other side of the hall to avoid someone?

Let a few students respond if they want.

SAY:

In Jesus's day, there was a whole region—an entire people group—that respectable people went out of their way to avoid. And Jesus said, "That's where we're going."

SET THE SCENE (5 MIN)

WHY SAMARIA MATTERED

- Samaritans and Jews hated each other and avoided each other completely. Most Jews would go miles out of their way to avoid Samaria.
- In that culture, a rabbi would not speak to a woman in public.
- The woman came to draw water alone at noon. Most women came together in the morning. She came alone because she likely carried shame and felt isolated.

ASK:

Who are the people in your school who show up when nobody else is around because they've learned it's safer that way?

BIBLE STUDY (15 MIN)

READ JOHN 4:1–42

Read aloud or have different students read sections. Then discuss these questions:

OBSERVE (WHAT DOES IT SAY?)

1. The Bible says Jesus "had to go through Samaria" (v. 4). Geographically, Jews often went around Samaria. What do you think "had to" really means here?
2. Notice verse 28: "The woman left her water jar." She came to get water. Why do you think she forgot it?

INTERPRET (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

3. Jesus offers her "living water." What do you think he's really describing? What was she thirsty for that no well could ever give?
4. She goes back to her town and says, "Come see a man who told me everything I ever did!" (v. 29). Her whole history—the thing that made her an outcast—becomes the headline of her testimony. What does that tell us about how Jesus uses broken stories?

APPLY (WHAT DOES IT ASK OF US?)

5. The woman started telling others about Jesus before she knew all of the answers. Her testimony was just: "He saw me." What would it look like to tell your own story that way?
6. Jesus went through Samaria on purpose. Mark 1:38 says he came to go to towns, to people. Who are the people in Louisiana that others tend to ignore or avoid?

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A LOUISIANA STORY (8 MIN)

BEHIND THE WALLS

SHARE THIS STORY:

In Louisiana, there's a prison exclusively for women. A former prison chaplain reached out to a minister, Dick DeBusk, about reaching the women inside. Along with churches and WMU groups, they began packing boxes of basic hygiene items. Their hope was to show the women that they are seen, they matter, and they are loved.

Each year, volunteers deliver boxes to the incarcerated women. DeBusk shares, "You realize these are real people. They are someone's child. Someone's grandmother. And you realize that Jesus loves them just as much as he loves anyone."

Connect: The woman at the well was there because she needed water for survival. The women in the prison didn't ask for anyone to come to them, but someone went anyway. Someone had to go through Samaria.

Ask: What do you think it costs to walk into a prison and hand someone a box? What does it take to go somewhere like that?

Follow-up: The Georgia Barnette Offering makes it possible for people to go. When you give—even a small amount—you're not just donating. You're going with them.

ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

LEAVE YOUR JAR

Choose one of the following based on your group:

OPTION A — WRITTEN REFLECTION

Give students an index card. Ask them to write:

- One thing they're carrying that feels heavier than a water jar.
- One "Samaria" in their world they've been avoiding.
- One person who might need someone to show up.

Invite them to share if they want.

OPTION B — GROUP DISCUSSION

Break into groups of 3–4. Give each group one scenario to discuss for 5 minutes, then share back:

- **Scenario 1:** A classmate at your school is known for something embarrassing or shameful. Everyone avoids them. What would it look like to be the person who goes to them instead?

- **Scenario 2:** You find out a family member is in prison. You've never visited. What makes it hard to go? What might change if you did?
- **Scenario 3:** Your church wants to start a mission in the hardest neighborhood in your city. Some people in the church are nervous. What's the argument for going anyway?

CLOSING (5 MIN)

CHALLENGE

SAY:

The woman left her jar because meeting Jesus became more important than the water. Jesus offered her living water: life, salvation, and hope that only he can give. She ran to tell the very people who had pushed her away.

The Georgia Barnette State Offering supports people who leave their jars—people who are going to prisons, isolated communities, and places others have written off because Jesus said, "We must go."

NEXT STEPS:

1. **Give.** Contribute to the Georgia Barnette Offering.
2. **Pray.** Commit to praying for someone in a Louisiana prison who feels forgotten.
3. **Go.** Identify one "Samaria" in your school or community this week. Don't go around it. Go through it.

CLOSING PRAYER



LEADER NOTES

- **Be sensitive:** Some students may have family members who are or have been incarcerated.
- **Connect every thread back to Mark 1:38.** Missions isn't a program. It's the posture of Jesus—always going, always to people, always on purpose.

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