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COMMUNITY GROUPS

RIVERS CROSSING CHURCH

Community Group Discussion Guide

May 5, 2024

Women in the Bible Week #2 / Women at the Well

Pastor Paul Taylor and Farrah Taylor

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Icebreaker Question | Now that the weather is finally warmer, what are some of your favorite spring and/or summer activities?
2. Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well was shocking (see for example the reaction of His disciples) as it crossed historical-cultural boundaries related to race, religion, gender, and morality.

John 4:27-30 (NLT) – ²⁷Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” ²⁸The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, ²⁹“Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” ³⁰So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

a) What societal barriers or prejudices exist today that parallel those encountered by Jesus and the Samaritan woman?

b) Reflect on your relationships and social interactions. How often do you cross boundaries to engage with people who think and behave differently than you? How can we follow Jesus' example of engaging with people from all walks of life?

3. Read the full story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well from John 4:1-42. Then discuss the corresponding questions.

John 4:5-10 (NLT) – ⁵Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. ⁷Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. ⁹The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?” ¹⁰Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

a) What stands out to you about Jesus from this story and His interactions with the Samaritan woman at the well? Explain why.

b) How do you feel about the fact that Jesus knows everything about you? Does that bring you comfort, peace, unease, dread, et cetera? Does Jesus' knowledge about you make you want to draw closer to Him or pull away from Him?

John 4:15-18, 28-29 (NLT) – ¹⁵“Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water.” ¹⁶“Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her. ¹⁷“I don't have a husband,” the woman replied. Jesus said, “You're right! You don't have a husband— ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!” ...²⁸The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village,

telling everyone, ²⁹“Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?”

DIVING DEEPER

4. Pastor Paul shared that the Samaritan woman teaches us that God can handle our questions, and we must face our sin to experience the extraordinary life Jesus offers.
- a) What are some of the core questions you’ve wrestled with and/or are currently wrestling with concerning God and your faith? How have you experienced God’s answer to those questions?

- b) Read 1 John 1:5-10. Coming face-to-face with our sin can be thought of as both the beginning of a relationship with Jesus and an ongoing habit of a follower of Jesus.

1 John 1:5-10 (NIV) – ⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

Like the Samaritan woman at the well, how has confronting your sin been a part of your relationship with Jesus? If you’re willing to share, is there a particular story of encountering Jesus’ grace and truth (i.e., John 1:14) that stands out to you?

5. Jesus uses a significant portion of His conversation with the Samaritan woman to describe salvation and life in the kingdom of God. Read the Bible passages below before discuss the corresponding questions.

John 4:13-14, 21-26 (NLT) – ¹³Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life”...²¹Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. ²³But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” ²⁵The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁶Then Jesus told her, “I am the Messiah!”

John 7:37-39 (NLT) – ³⁷On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! ³⁸Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, ‘Rivers of living water will flow

from his heart.”³⁹(When he said “living water,” he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)

Isaiah 44:1-5 (NIV) – ¹“But now listen, Jacob, my servant,
Israel, whom I have chosen.

²This is what the Lord says—
he who made you, who formed you in the womb,
and who will help you:

Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant,
Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

³For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;

I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.

⁴They will spring up like grass in a meadow,
like poplar trees by flowing streams.

⁵Some will say, ‘I belong to the Lord’;
others will call themselves by the name of Jacob;
still others will write on their hand, ‘The Lord’s,’
and will take the name Israel.

Isaiah 53:1-3 (NIV) – ¹“Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;

and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.

²Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.

³Give ear and come to me;
listen, that you may live.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.

How would you describe the picture of salvation Jesus describes? How is this connected with the person and work of the Holy Spirit?

6. Pastor Paul shared that when we truly encounter the love of Jesus, we’ll tell people about Him. Consider the Samaritan woman’s response to her encounter with Jesus, where she immediately shares her experience with others.

a) How can we cultivate a similar sense of urgency and enthusiasm in sharing our own encounters with Jesus with those around us?

b) Who has God put in your life (i.e., your “8 to 15”) that needs Jesus? How can sharing your story with them be an effective form of evangelism?

TAKING IT HOME

7. What's your biggest takeaway from this week's sermon and our group discussion?
How can you put that into action this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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RIVERS CROSSING - THINGS TO KNOW

1. Men's Night | We're hosting a FREE Men's Event on Sunday May 5th! We'll start at 5pm with a message from our Lead Pastor Paul Taylor. Then we'll have an extended and unhurried time of food (City BBQ), fun (outdoor games, fire pits, etc.), and fellowship as we enjoy our renovated outdoor lawn and lobby spaces! You're not going to want to miss Men's Night and you're going to want to invite a friend!
If you're planning to join us, please let us know by registering. Thanks!
<https://riverscrossing.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2212814>
2. Baptisms - Saturday May 18th | We believe baptism is an integral part of your spiritual journey and necessary as you seek to become a fully engaged follower of Christ. If you've recently decided to follow Jesus or you've been a Christ follower for a while but never gotten baptized, now is the perfect time to take this next step! This baptism service will be held on our renovated lawn space at 3pm. Learn more and sign up by visiting <https://riverscrossing.com/grow/>