Preschool–Grade 6

The Woman at the Well

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Jesus loves everyone and offers living water to anyone who asks. When we meet Him, we tell others, "Come, see."
Bible passage: John 4:1–42. Students read John 4:1–30 and 4:39–42 out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." *John 4:14 (KJV)* and "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." *John 4:24 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read John 4 and John 7:37–39. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Thirsty Again (5–10 minutes)

Ask students to call out things people want and chase: a new phone, a game, being popular, winning, nice clothes. Write them on the board. For each one, ask: *Once you get it, how long does it make you happy? Do you want something more after that?* Say: "A thing can be good and still leave you thirsty again. Today Jesus offers a woman water that is different."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: John 4:1–15. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **must needs go** (4:4): had to go
- **Sychar** (4:5): a city of Samaria; **parcel of ground**: a field
- **wearied** (4:6): tired; **the sixth hour**: about noon (the Jews counted the hours from sunrise)
- **meat** (4:8): food
- **no dealings** (4:9): the Jews and the Samaritans kept away from each other
- **whosoever drinketh** (4:13–14): anyone who drinks; **springing up**: bubbling up like a spring
- **neither come hither to draw** (4:15): and not have to come here to get water

Read out loud: John 4:16–30. Old words in this passage:

- **thou hast well said** (4:17): you told the truth
- **I perceive** (4:19): I can see; **prophet**: someone who speaks for God
- **in spirit and in truth** (4:23–24): from the heart, by God's Spirit, and the way God's Word says
- **Messias** (4:25): the KJV spelling of Messiah, the Saviour God promised; **Christ** means the same
- **marvelled** (4:27): were amazed; **waterpot** (4:28): the jar she carried water in

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Tell the middle part in your own words: While the woman was in the city, the disciples urged Jesus, "Master, eat." Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," and "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" (4:31–34). He told them to lift up their eyes and look on the fields, "for they are white already to harvest" (4:35). He was talking about people ready to believe, gathered "unto life eternal" (4:36), and the people of the city were already coming out to Him (4:30).

Read out loud: John 4:39–42. Old words in this passage:

- **testified** (4:39): told what she knew to be true
- **besought him that he would tarry** (4:40): begged Him to stay; **abode**: stayed
- **Saviour of the world** (4:42): the One who saves people everywhere, Jews and Samaritans alike

God is a Spirit (4:24). God does not have a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), and He fills heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:24). "The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4). That one God, who is a Spirit, was "manifest in the flesh" as Jesus (1 Timothy 3:16), "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). So the woman at the well was talking with God Himself, come as a man. When she said the Messias was coming, Jesus said, "I that speak unto thee am he" (4:26).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. The Jews and the Samaritans had no dealings with each other (4:9), and the disciples marvelled that Jesus talked with her (4:27). What does Jesus' choice to talk with her show about who He loves?
2. Who gets left out at your school or in your town? What would it look like to treat them the way Jesus treated the woman?
3. Jesus told the woman things about her life that nobody had told Him (4:16–18), and she called Him a prophet (4:19). How does it feel to know Jesus knows everything about you and still loves you?
4. Jesus said that whoever drinks well water "shall thirst again" (4:13). What things leave people thirsty again? What does Jesus offer instead (4:14)?
5. Jesus said true worship is "in spirit and in truth," not about one mountain or one city (4:21–24). What does worshiping God in spirit and in truth look like at church, and at home?
6. The woman left her waterpot and went straight to the city (4:28). Many believed because of what she said, and many more when they heard Jesus themselves (4:39–42). Who could you invite to "come, see"?

4. Memory verses (5 minutes)

Old words in John 4:24: **God is a Spirit** means God is not made of flesh like us; He is the one God, everywhere at once. **Worship him in spirit and in truth** means worship from the heart, by God's Spirit, and the way His Word says.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say John 4:14 this week; keep working on John 4:24 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Jesus explained living water later in John: 'He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)' (John 7:38–39, KJV). **Out of his belly** means from deep inside. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, the living water, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What do I chase that leaves me "thirsty again"?
2. Who is someone others leave out that I can be kind to this week?
3. Write a short prayer thanking Jesus for His love, and asking Him for courage to tell someone, "Come, see."
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: be kind to someone who usually gets left out, and invite one person to church or tell them what Jesus has done for you.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus loves everyone and knows everything about us. Thank You for the living water of Your Spirit. Help us worship You in spirit and in truth, and give us courage to tell others, 'Come, see.' In Jesus' name, amen."

About the woman's husbands (John 4:16–18): read the verses as written. The Bible does not say why she had had five husbands or anything more about her past, so don't guess or add to it, and don't make her the bad example of the lesson. John's focus is that Jesus knew her whole life, offered her living water anyway, and that she became the one who brought her city to Jesus (4:39).

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