

Children & Young People's Talk

John 4v5-42: **Water of Life**

Please feel free to adapt the materials depending on the age and stage of children you are teaching.

Main Objectives

- To understand our own need (thirst) for God
- To understand that God satisfies our need (thirst) and gives us everlasting life
- To understand that Jesus offers us free eternal life even though we don't deserve it
- To understand that there are many children in the world who do not have clean running water and we can help make life better for them

Warm-up Activity

- **Worship song** - If you normally start with a song here are some ideas which you can find actions, music and lyrics for on Youtube:
 - Peace Like a River (Kids Worship)
 - Deep Cries Out (Bethel Music Kids)
 - The River (Kids Worship)
- **Game** - you could start with a game to get the kids warmed up and interested:
 - Water relay - Divide the children into two teams. Each team has one full bucket and one empty bucket at each end of the room. In a relay-style race, the children must move the water from the full bucket to the empty bucket by filling an empty water bottle and ferrying it back to the empty bucket, before passing onto the next team member. The first team to fill their bucket wins!
 - Bible verse thirst quencher - Each child receives a bottle of water with part of the bible verse from today written on it. They have to get themselves into the correct order and read out the passage phrase by phrase (or bottle by bottle).



Teaching - Slide 2

Main text: John 4v5-42 (possibly verse 5-14 for younger learners is enough)

Take time to read the passage together. You may even want to act out the passage, with parts for Jesus, the woman at the well, the disciples, the villagers and even Jacob!

⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. ⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, "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." ¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" ¹³Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but 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."

¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." ¹⁶He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." ¹⁷"I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The 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." ¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." ²⁵The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." ²⁶Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he." 2 of 8



²⁷Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?” ²⁸Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” ³⁰They came out of the town and made their way toward him. ³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” ³²But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.” ³³Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” ³⁴“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ³⁵Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. ³⁶Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. ³⁸I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour.” ³⁹Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹And because of his words many more became believers. ⁴²They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.”

(With older learners you may like to open this up for discussion and go over any questions they may have about the passage.)

Discussion - Slide 3

Does anyone know what it’s like to be thirsty? Yes, we have all been thirsty at some point. On this day Jesus was especially thirsty because he was on a long journey on foot through Samaria, and it was very dry and hot and the sun was high in the sky because it was the middle of the day. He sat down at a well, and a lady was there getting some water for herself. We know that she was a Samaritan, and the Samaritans and the Jews didn’t really get along well, so it would have been really unusual for Jesus, a Jew, to talk to a Samaritan. Even more than that - she was a woman! In those days, women were not considered equal to men, so Jesus was breaking the mould by talking with her. And finally, women would normally have come to draw water during the cooler parts of the day. The fact that she was out to get water in the middle of the day - the hottest time - means she probably wanted to avoid other people and wasn’t very well accepted even among her own people.



Question - why do you think Jesus wanted to speak with this person, even though she was a Samaritan woman who wasn't well accepted with the Jews or even with her own people?

- Jesus cares about people who are considered outcast by society
- Jesus had a plan for her life, just like he has for all of us
- Jesus knew that she needed saved by him
- She would become the first “evangelist” to her town, leading many to believe in Jesus

In the place this woman lived, people commonly experienced drought. A little bit later, we will be talking about a place called South Sudan, where Comfort International works. South Sudan is a place that even today has a lot of drought. A drought is when there is no rain, and that means that no crops grow, and people can often run out of food and clean water. Samaria didn't have streams and rivers, like we have in Scotland, so they often relied on getting their water by digging a well and pulling the water up out of the well. Because it was still, and not flowing water, it was referred to as “dead water”, unlike a moving stream, spring or river, which would be referred to as “living water” because it was fresh and that made it very precious.

But Jesus was talking about something even more precious than water coming from a stream or a river. Just like we all feel thirsty sometimes, and we feel a great need for water, each of us also has a great need for God, even though sometimes we don't even realise it. God made each one of us, and loves us deeply, just like that woman at the well, and he made us to have a relationship with Him. That means that our hearts have a big God-shaped hole in them, that only He can fill. And Jesus says that unlike your physical thirst which will always come back no matter how much you drink, when you believe in Jesus as your Saviour, the longing for a relationship with God, and for purpose and meaning for our lives, will be filled and we will never feel abandoned or alone or with that deep longing in our hearts again. Jesus is enough.

Other discussion points/questions:

- What does it mean to worship in Spirit and in truth?
- This is the first time that Jesus revealed himself as Messiah - why is it significant that this was to a Samaritan woman (because Jesus' salvation would be for all people (like us) and not just the Jews)
- Harvest - Jesus talks about the harvest being ready - what does he mean? What is a harvest? You can mention we are in harvest time just now. Who are the workers? Are you willing to be a worker in God's harvest?



Comfort International - Slide 4

We were learning today about places that experience drought and Comfort International is a charity that works in very poor countries across Africa like South Sudan that experience drought every day. Stella is in Primary 7, and had a very difficult childhood, including becoming an orphan when she was just a young child and being badly treated by people who were supposed to look after her. Comfort International have a project in South Sudan which helps children like Stella, and she came onto the project where she received food, water, medical support, education, and very importantly, love and compassion to help heal the wounds of the past. She gave some visitors a challenge, by putting a pen in a plastic bottle and asked them to get it out without touching the bottle. When nobody could do it, she eventually filled the bottle up with water and the pen floated to the top. She said she was like that pen in the past, stuck with no way of getting out, in a bad place and very low. Then, when Comfort International helped her and she met Jesus, it was like the water lifted her up out of that bad place so now she can be happy. That is what Jesus did for Stella and what he can do for you.

Quiz - Slide 5 Here are some questions about South Sudan, about water and about the work Comfort International does. How much do you know?

Slide 6 - Question

How much water is it recommended to drink in one day?

- A. 1 cup
- B. 5 cups
- C. 9 cups
- D. 25 cups

Slide 7 - Answer

The answer is C. It is recommended to drink 2 litres of water a day which is equivalent to about 8 or 9 cups of water!

Slide 8 - Question

South Sudan is the

- A. newest
- B. oldest
- C. highest
- D. lowest country in the world



Slide 9 - Answer

The answer is A - South Sudan is the newest country in the world! It became independent in 2011, making it the youngest country in the world.

Slide 10- languages

How many languages (and dialects) are spoken in South Sudan?

- A. 250
- B. 60
- C. 10
- D. 3

Slide 11- Answer

The answer is B. There are around 60 languages spoken in South Sudan, including English, Juba Arabic and many others. Can you say anything in another language?

Slide 12 - Question

Where is the capital of South Sudan (this is also the location of Comfort International's projects)?

- A. Kinshasa
- B. Juba
- C. Bujumbura
- D. Kigali

Slide 13 - Answer

The answer is B - Juba! Kinshasa is the capital of Democratic Republic of Congo, Bujumbura is the capital of Burundi and Kigali is the capital of Rwanda, but Comfort International works in all of these countries.

Slide 14 - Question

Which river runs through the middle of Juba?

- A. The Nile
- B. The Zambezi
- C. The Amazon
- D. The Tay



Slide 15 - Answer

A - The Nile. More specifically, it is the White Nile, a tributary of the Nile, which runs through South Sudan.

Slide 16 - Question

South Sudan has a huge ...

- A. Mountain Range
- B. Desert
- C. Inland Sea
- D. Swamp

Slide 17 - Answer

D - swamp! This was a bit of a trick question, because even though South Sudan experiences droughts, it isn't in the desert, but it does have a very large swampland called the Sudd.

Slide 18 - Question

What percentage of girls in South Sudan finish Primary School?

- A. 18%
- B. 50%
- C. 76%
- D. 90%

Slide 19 - Answer

A - only 18% of girls finish Primary School in South Sudan. This is due to many reasons, as a lot of them need to work at home, and their parents don't have money to send them to school, or it is not safe for them to go to school because of the war that is going on there.

Slide 20 - Question

Which flag belongs to South Sudan?

Slide 21 - Answer

A! See if you can name the other countries' flags! (South Africa, Scotland and Rwanda).



Slide 22 - Thank you!

Shokran means thank you in Juba Arabic - one of the main languages spoken in South Sudan.

If you still have time, check out our **Take The Challenge** page. It's full of fun activities! Discuss what people can do to help people like Stella live a better life.

For more information and to donate

 enquiry@comfortinternational.org

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   [comfortinternational](https://www.comfortinternational.org)

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