

Worksheets

God at the Center

He is sovereign and I am not.

Book 4 – Personal Study Guide

Stephen H Berkey



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Joseph

husband of Virgin Mary

Discussion Questions

A1. Must one believe in the virgin birth at the time of conversion?

A2. What would have been significant to Jewish readers in Matthew 1:16?

A3. What is the most striking fact or occurrence to you in this story, other than the virgin birth?

A4. If you had been either Joseph or Mary in this story, what would have been the most difficult aspect of the whole situation?

A5. In strictly human terms, what possible problems might the facts surrounding Jesus' birth have had on the marriage relationship between Joseph and Mary?

A6. How might Joseph have felt about being the "parent" of the Son of God or the Messiah?

Q. Would Joseph have thought Jesus was more than the "son of God"? Would he have had reason to think Jesus was the Messiah?

A7. What do we learn about our faith from this story of Joseph? How would you have reacted under these circumstances if you had been Joseph?

Q. How would you really have known it was God? How would you have known or confirmed it was God? Is there any information in Scripture that would have helped?

A8. The Greek form of Jesus is Joshua. What does "Joshua" mean?

Q. What do you think this name and its meaning would have meant to the people at that time?

A9. Why was Joseph told what to name the child and not Mary?

B. IMPLICATIONS

B1. What does verse Matthew 1:19 tell us about Joseph? What does it mean that he is a righteous man?

B2. What do you think were the motives behind Joseph's intent to divorce Mary quietly?

B3. What does verse Matthew 1:20 tell us about Joseph?

B4. In Matthew 1:21 what reason does the author give for Jesus' birth?

B5. What is the author's primary purpose in Matthew 1:22-23?

NOTE: The book of Matthew was written primarily to the Jews.

B6. What do we learn about Joseph in Matthew 1:24?

B7. After the stories about Jesus' birth, Joseph is not mentioned by name again in Scripture. It is assumed he died during Jesus' youth. Assuming this was by design, what are the logical reasons why God might want Joseph out of the picture?

B8. Why must the Holy Spirit be the cause of the pregnancy and not Joseph? What doctrinal issue requires a "virgin birth"?

C. DREAMS

C1. How many dreams did Joseph have? Who spoke to him and what was he told to do?

C2. Why do you think Joseph believed these dreams without any reported questions about their validity?

C3. What were typical purposes of dreams and visions in the Bible?

D. APPLICATION

D1. Do you need to trust or obey God for something He is telling you to do?

D2. Is there something God is telling you to escape or flee from and you are delaying?

D3. Is there someone you need to protect or rescue?

D4. Have you been away and it is now time to return?

Sinful Woman

the repentant prostitute

Discussion Questions

A1. Where was Jesus and why?

A2. What problems would Simon, the Pharisee, have because of the woman's profession?

A3. If you were Simon and you knew who the woman was and you observed her enter the house, what would you have done?

A4. List all the significant actions the woman took. Which one do you think most represented her commitment or attitude?

A5. Why didn't the woman anoint Jesus' head with the perfume, which would have been more customary?

A6. The text doesn't say why the woman was weeping. What do you think was the reason?

A7. Do you think the woman intentionally wet Jesus' feet or was it an accident because she was at His feet? Why?

A8. How would you contrast the woman's actions (in A4 above) with those of the Pharisee (Simon)?

A9. Contrast how Simon and the woman thought of themselves.

A10. Is there anything meaningful about the fact that the woman wiped Jesus' feet with her hair rather than some portion of her clothing?

A11. Do you think you would have done what the woman did? Why? Why not?

A12. The perfume was very valuable. It may have been the woman's only possession of value. How would you describe the perfume and what it represented or expressed?

A13. How would you contrast Jesus' attitudes toward Simon, a Pharisee, and the woman who is supposedly a prostitute? Explain.

A14. How should Simon have responded to the parable and Jesus' act of forgiving the woman's sins?

A15. What are some questions Simon might have asked to gain understanding of Jesus' actions?

A16. How do you react personally to this act of worship by the sinful woman?

A17. If all you knew about the woman in this passage was contained in verse 38, what words or phrases would you use to describe her?

A18. The woman would normally have been shunned by the Pharisees (and others) because of her sinful past. Do we treat people like this today? If so, who are they and why do we treat them as lepers in the church?

A19. Put into words what you think Jesus' response to the sinful woman meant to her.

48 . . . "Your sins are forgiven." 49 Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" 50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." ESV

Q. Although the woman seemed to be overwhelmed with love for her Savior, what is it that Jesus said saved her?

A20. All Simon saw was a sinful woman, but Jesus saw something else. If you had been there, what would you have seen? Why?

A21. It could not have been accidental that Simon ignored all the normal actions of a host. Why do you think Simon intentionally ignored Jesus?

A22. God loves people who take spiritual risks. Jesus confirmed this woman's forgiveness and gave her a new lease on life. She was not asked to invest her wealth in an act of worship, but she did. Can you think of any other stories or situations in Scripture where someone took a big spiritual risk? Explain.

A23. Can you think of other acts of worship in Scripture that are as meaningful as what this woman did?

B. APPLICATION

B1. This woman was so overwhelmed with gratitude that she ignored social norms. She was totally committed to Christ. What would have to happen in your life today to give your savings (or most of it) to a Kingdom cause and completely trust in God?

B2. Do your actions speak for you? Would your actions convict you of being a Christ-follower?

B3. Do you need to do something bold for Christ?

B4. Do you need to imitate this woman in any way?

The Potter

and the clay

Ten Principles of the Potter and the Clay

A. SOURCE: Man and clay both come from the earth.

A1. What did God do in Genesis 1 that relates to what the potter does before he begins to work?

A2. What else did God do in Genesis 2:7 to make man alive that relates to the potter?

B. NATURE: Man is inherently sinful and clay is innately impure.

B1. In this story of the potter, the clay or pot that is marred is not discarded. How would you compare this with how God relates to man?

B2. After a pot is initially formed, it is put in a kiln and fired to 1000-1500C. How would you compare this final process for a pot to what God does with man?

C. PROCESS: There are procedures and techniques necessary to form both the clay and man.

C1. What are some techniques God uses to form and shape His people?

C2. Which of these techniques has God used in your life?

D. REQUIRED INGREDIENTS: The potter needs water and God requires the Word.

D1. What do you think happens if too little water is used in the clay? How might you relate this to the amount of God's Word necessary for man?

D2. Must a non-believer begin reading and studying the Bible before he can be saved? Why? Why not?

D3. If a saved believer does not read the Bible, what happens? What are some of the likely scenarios?

E. ORIENTATION: The clay must be centered on the wheel and man must be focused on Jesus.

E1. What do you believe is the biggest stumbling block (human characteristic) to being fully committed to Christ?

E2. What does it mean to you that Jesus is Lord of your life?

E3. Write a short sentence explaining what it means for your life to be centered on Jesus.

F. PATIENCE: The forming and molding process takes time.

F1. How would you relate this characteristic of the potter's process to God and man?

F2. What characteristics and values of the secular world work against slow and steady growth?

G. PURPOSE: God will develop man to his full potential.

G1. Are you fully utilizing your secular skills and spiritual gifts for the work of the Kingdom?

G2. What does God want you to do? What is God calling you to do? What are you good at?

G3. If you feel that you are not fully engaged with God or the church, what will it take for you to allow God to finish the work He started?

H. EXCESS CLAY: God will always be doing pruning in your life.

H1. What has God already cut from your life? What might God want to cut out of your life or personality in the future?

H2. How about your life priorities? Are they aligned with God? Do you have life priorities?

- Is your job more important than your relationship with Christ?
- Do you put family ahead of Christ?
- Do you have hobbies or activities that are more important than Christ?

I. FOCUS: God’s attention is always on you.

I1. Did you ever fight against the hand of God in your life? What happened?

I2. Do you have a friend or family member who needs to hear these ten principles?

J. WARNING: The vessel is fragile.

J1. What does the firing process do to the pot?

J2. What do you think God might do to harden (finish) a disciple for His ultimate use?

K. WILL: The will of the Potter.

What’s the Potter doing in your life these days?

Ananias & Sapphira

they dropped dead

Discussion Questions

A1. Has anyone present ever told a:

- a. Little white lie?
- b. Bold-face lie?

Q. So, why aren't we all dead?

A2. What do you think this story is really about? What is one word or phrase that represents the foundational issue in this story? Explain.

A3. What would you name as the primary sin underlying Ananias and Sapphira's behavior? Why?

A4. What do you suspect could be some of the practical reasons Ananias and Sapphira lied about the money?

A5. What does 5:4 say about Ananias' need to deceive? Can you put this in your own language to clarify what Peter was saying?

A6. How do you think Peter knew about Ananias keeping money back?

A7. What did God accomplish with this act of judgment? Why do you think God dealt so severely with Ananias and Sapphira?

A8. Do you find it strange that Sapphira was not told immediately about her husband's death when she approached the house?

A9. Was their punishment fair and just?

A10. It appears they agreed to be very generous, but then simply were not as generous as they had promised. Does that warrant God's wrath?

A11. How would you have felt if you had just finished burying Ananias and returned to find out that you must now bury Sapphira?

A12. What exactly did Peter accuse Ananias of doing and why?

Q. What do you think all this means specifically? What must have occurred for Peter to make this accusation?

A13. Why was Sapphira accused of testing the Spirit of the Lord. What do you think that means?

A14. What is the significance of 5:5 and 5:11 . . . "*Great fear came on the whole church?*"

Q. Was this "fear" good or bad?

A15. Why did God choose to act in this way? Why didn't He render this type of just punishment in all the other life situations where it was equally deserved? You and I have probably done things equally as bad and the result was not instant death. Why?

A16. Why would God want this story in the Bible? At first glance this does not seem to be a situation that would impress outsiders or seekers. Why not leave this story out altogether? If it were your choice, would you put it in the Bible or leave it out? Why?

A17. How do outsiders typically evaluate the integrity or trustworthiness of a particular church?

Q. Why is corrupting church members a favorite tactic of Satan today?

A18. Today if a Christian leader speaks out nationally against a particular sin, what typically happens? Why?

Q. What might be an alternate strategy to calling out a nation or group, or a particular sinful act?

B. APPLICATION

B1. Has someone's generosity ever inspired you to act generously? Explain.

B2. In what ways do we lie to each other in our Christian communities and small groups?

B3. Have you ever tried to nudge or influence God? Maybe you pray frequently for wants rather than needs. Or maybe you are openly "testing" God and thinking He doesn't know or care. How did that work out for you?

B4. Are you in any danger of punishment? Or are consequences surely coming, and you just don't know what and when?

Jabez

he prayed for blessing

Discussion Questions

A1. Why would the author include this extra information about Jabez? What makes his prayer worthy of mention?

A2. What do you think it means that Jabez was "more honorable than his brothers"?

A3. List other prayers the Bible tells us God answered.

A4. After God answered this prayer, what other requests might Jabez need or want to pray? For each of his requests, how might Jabez expand his prayer to ensure a desired result?

- Be blessed.

- Increase territory.

- Protection and empowerment

- Protected from harm or evil.

- Not cause pain.

A5. How can we pray this prayer and not be selfish? What is our motive?

B. BORDER (Territory)

B1. Territory (land) was a fundamental wealth component during the time of Jabez. If you were praying a similar prayer today, what might you pray for? Why?

B2. What other areas of life (other than wealth or influence) could you ask to be expanded?

Q. In which one of these areas could you personally have the biggest impact? Why?

B3. Is it appropriate to pray for wealth?

B4. If "territory" represents relationships, in what ways do you think God might want you to enlarge your personal territory? Why?

C. BLESSING

C1. Jabez's first request was to be blessed. Do you think it is appropriate to ask God to bless you?

C2. When you ask for blessing what are you personally thinking you are asking for? What are you expecting?

C3. How do you think God responds to an "open-ended" honest request for blessing? (An open-ended request means there are no specifics.)

C4. What would your life look like if God poured out His blessing on you and your family? In what areas of your life would He be most likely to bless you? Why?

C5. Do you think God's blessings are conditional or unconditional? Why? Why not?

D. POWER

D1. Was there a time in your life when you asked for God's power? What happened?

D2. What are some of the excuses we all give for staying in our comfort zones?

E. EVIL

E1. What evil do you want God to protect you from? Are there areas of your life that you play close to the edge where you would desire God's power to keep you safe?

E2. If Satan designed a trap or temptation to snare you, what would it be? Or what is your greatest weakness? We are normally vulnerable at our weak points.

F. APPLICATION

F1. What, if anything, are you doing today that requires God's power, other than life in general?

F2. Do you have not because you ask not? Does your prayer life need to improve and become more focused?

F3. Are you asking for the things you need or for what you want?

F4. Do your prayers have eternal significance? For example, do you pray:

That my life would bring praise and honor to God.

That I would know God.

That I have a right relationship with Christ.

That my worship is acceptable and heartfelt.

That I thirst for the truth of God's Word.

That I love God with all my heart, strength, mind, soul.

That Christ is the central focus and reality of my life.

That I always have a thankful heart.

F5. Are your prayers big enough?

Challenge Exercise:

Expanded Prayer

Subject: _____

Prayer: _____

Zophar

one of Job's friends

Discussion Questions

A1. From Job 11:17-20, list the hope that Zophar described:

11:17 _____

11:18 _____

11:19 _____

11:19 _____

11:20 _____

A2. Which one of these five hopeful occurrences in 11:17-20 do you think is the most important and why?

A3. What does it mean that "its darkness will be like morning"? (11:17)

A4. Why would it be important that "many will seek your favor" (11:19b)?

A5. Why do you think it is important that Zophar included verse 20?

Q. What if this were not true (there was no justice)?

A6. Is life with God always "brighter than the noonday?" (11:17)

A7. What does Zophar imply or say Job must do to receive the hopeful blessings he listed in 11:13-14? Job 11:13-14 *If you prepare your heart, you will stretch out your hands toward him. 14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away, and let not injustice dwell in your tents. ESV*

Q. What is the underlying assumption behind Zophar's suggestions?

A8. How would you describe Zophar's theology relative to suffering (shared by the other two friends)?

A9. In your own words and view what were the three friends trying to accomplish with their words of hope?

B. JOB

B1. What was Job's state of mind in the following passages?

Job 7:6-7 *My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and come to their end without hope. 7 Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good. ESV*

B2. What does 7:3 say about his state of mind before he made the above statement?

Job 7:3 *so I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me. ESV*

B3. Jumping ahead, after the three friends had made their first speeches, did Job's state of mind change? How would you describe Job in the following two passages?

Job 13:15-18 *Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face. 16 This will be my salvation, that the godless shall not come before him. 17 Keep listening to my words, and let my declaration be in your ears. 18 Behold, I have prepared my case; I know that I shall be in the right.* ESV

Job 14:18-20 *But the mountain falls and crumbles away, and the rock is removed from its place; 19 the waters wear away the stones; the torrents wash away the soil of the earth; so you destroy the hope of man. 20 You prevail forever against him, and he passes; you change his countenance, and send him away.* ESV

B4. In Job 16-17 Elipaz replied to Job. Following are the last two verses of chapter 17. How is Job doing?

Job 17:15-16 *"Where then is my hope? Who will see my hope? 16 Will it go down to the bars of Sheol? Shall we descend together into the dust?"* ESV

B5. Bildad spoke again in chapter 18 and then Job said:

Job 19:8-10 *He has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass, and he has set darkness upon my paths. 9 He has stripped from me my glory and taken the crown from my head. 10 He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone, and my hope has he pulled up like a tree.* ESV

Q. Who is the "he" Job is referring to?

Q. How would you describe Job's view of his life status at this point?

C. BIBLICAL HOPE

C1. Given 42:7 how would you describe the result of all the positive words Zophar did have to say? Did they carry the day?

C2. What do you think was the basic underlying cause of the ongoing unsupportive dialogue against Job?

Q. Where do we see this at work today?

C3. Where does hope come from?

C4. What do the following four passages from Proverbs tell us not to put our hope in?

11:7 _____

Proverbs 11:7 *When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.* ESV

11:23 _____

Proverbs 11:23 *The desire of the righteous ends only in good; the expectation of the wicked in wrath.* ESV

23:17-18 _____

Proverbs 23:17-18 *Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear of the Lord all the day. 18 Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.* ESV

26:12 _____

Proverbs 26:12 *Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.* ESV

Q. Remember that proverbs are general, but not absolute, truths. Would your life experiences confirm all of these proverbs? Which one would you give an "Amen"? Why?

C5. What are the worldly things in which you might put your hope?

D. CHRISTIAN HOPE

D1. Identify the object of our Christian hope in the following passages:

D1a. _____

Colossians 1:5 *because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, ESV*

D1b. _____

1 Peter 1:13 *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ESV*

D1c. _____

Acts 24:15 *having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. ESV*

D1d. _____

Psalms 119:147 *I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words. ESV*

D1e. _____

Psalms 147:11 *but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love. ESV*

D2. In Titus 3:6-7, what is the result of our hope in Christ?

Titus 3:6-7 *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ESV*

E. APPLICATION

E1. Do you live your life with hope and joy? If not, why not?

E2. Can you testify to the importance of hope?

E3. Do you have hope in anything other than the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? If so what is it and how is that working for you?

E4. Do you have serious concerns or doubts in the Gospel message? What is your concern? Can you honestly say that you believe the following?

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ESV

And that's why we have HOPE!

Ten Virgins

who ran out of oil

Discussion Questions

A1. In this parable who is represented by:

a) the five wise virgins _____

b) the five foolish virgins _____

c) the bridegroom _____

A2. Based on 25:1, what is the purpose of the parable?

A3. What are the primary teaching points of the parable?

A4. Do you think this parable means that few will enter the kingdom?

A5. The unprepared virgins are described as "foolish." What does that word mean to you?

A6. How would you contrast the qualities or nature of the five wise virgins and those who ran out of oil?

A7. Why didn't the foolish virgins get extra oil when they saw the extra oil of the wise virgins?

A8. Do you think it was unfair or selfish that the five virgins with extra oil did not share?

A9. In the context of what this parable is teaching, what would it mean for the wise virgins to warn the foolish ones to get more oil?

A10. Is there spiritual meaning to the wise virgins not sharing oil?

A11. What personal character attributes are present in today's society that are in conflict with this Biblical truth?

A12. What does this parable teach the person who thinks he can wait until late in life to make a decision about Christ (to be prepared), or put off the question until a later time when it is more convenient?

A13. What do you think it means "to be prepared"?

A14. Do you think it was "fair" that the bridegroom closed the door and would not permit others who wanted to enter to come into the celebration?

A15. If closing the door is shutting out unprepared sinners from heaven, do you think that is something a loving God would do?

B. KNOWING GOD

B1. In Mt 25:12 the bridegroom (representing God or Jesus) says he does not know the latecomers and the door will remain shut. What do you think it means to know God? Job answered this question in Job 22:21-30:

Q. How did Job describe the relationship in the following verses:

- 22:21 _____.
- 22:22 _____.
- 22:23 _____.
- 22:24-26 _____.
- 22:27 _____.
- 22:29-30 _____.

B2. Do you think it is possible that the teaching point is not the concept of "knowing God" (or God knowing us), but that it is simply that the foolish ones did not plan well and were simply lazy or complacent?

B3. There are four major concepts or principles that demonstrate that we know God!

#1. What major principle do we learn from these two verses about knowing Christ?

1 John 2:3 *We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.*

1 John 2:6 *Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.*

Answer: _____

#2. What do we learn in the following about knowing God? What act demonstrates that we know Him?

1 John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ESV*

1 Corinthians 8:1-3 *Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. 2 If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. 3 But if anyone loves God, he is known by God. ESV*

Answer: _____

#3. Based on John 15:4-5, how do we know that we know Him? How is the intimate relationship described?

John 15:4-6 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ESV*

Answer: _____

#4. What is the requirement for knowing God in the following:

Titus 1:16 *They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. ESV*

Answer: _____

C. REQUIREMENTS FOR BEING A DISCIPLE**C1.** Based on the following what are the requirements for being a disciple of Jesus?**#1** What is the requirement in John 8:31?

"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples."

Answer: _____

#2 What is the requirement in John 13:35?

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Answer: _____

#3 What is the requirement in John 15:8?

". . . that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

Answer: _____

C2. What conclusions can you draw by comparing C1 and B3?

D. APPLICATION

D1. In addition to knowing Jesus, The Parable of the Ten Virgins teaches us that we must always be prepared for His coming. We cannot be lazy or complacent because that is not the desired status Jesus wants from His followers.

Are you prepared?

D2. Another understanding we gain from this parable is that others cannot cover for our unfaithfulness. The five virgins with excess oil only had enough for themselves. Each person must be responsible for his own relationship with God. There are no second chances once the door is closed.

Have you taken responsibility?

D3. How do you want Jesus to find you when He returns? What do you think Jesus expects or desires of His people when He returns?

Are you ready?

D4. In the real world (your life) what gets in the way of knowing Christ?

- What gets in the way of following His commands?
- What gets in the way of loving God and loving others?
- What gets in the way of abiding in Christ and He in you?
- What gets in the way of producing fruit?
- What gets in the way of your prayer life?
- What gets in the way of your serving in the church?

What's in your way?

The Samaritans

listened to woman at well

Discussion Questions

A1. The text says the woman went back to town and told the "men" what had happened. Why only the men? Do you think that means she did not tell any of the women?

A2. Do you think the woman had credibility with the townspeople?

A3. Did the woman tell her "husband" (the man she was living with)? Assuming the woman did not tell him about Jesus first, why not?

A4. What is the significance, if any, of the woman leaving her water jug at the well?

A5. What was the woman's testimony to the men?

A6. Why did the Samaritans believe, given she was a woman and had a poor reputation?

A7. Given that "many" Samaritans believed, why did Jesus stay for only two days? Why would Jesus leave the Samaritans on their own?

A8. Why did the men tell the woman they no longer believed just based on her testimony (4:42)?

A9. What three things are particularly significant in 4:42b, "*we have heard for ourselves and know that this is indeed the Savior of the world?*" (ESV)

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

A10. How do you think this overwhelming understanding occurred? This seems like a very big leap.

A11. Why did Jesus reveal He was the Messiah? This is really the only time that Jesus says that He is the Messiah (although Mk 9:41 comes close). Why do you suspect that Jesus revealed this in Samaria and not in Jerusalem?

A12. Jesus spent two days with the Samaritans. What does that say about the Jewish custom of shunning the Samaritans?

A13. Can you think of any other examples in Scripture when Jesus did not conform to common Jewish customs?

A14. Why do you think Jesus traveled through Samaria? John 4:4 says, "*He had to pass through Samaria.*" This implies some bigger purpose than just the quickest way to reach Galilee.

A15. Jesus spoke to one person (the woman at the well) and that one conversation led many Samaritans from the town to belief. Do you find this result normal or an exception to normal experience?

A16. Can you think of any example in our society today where Christians refuse to go through "Samaria"?

A17. What is the nature of the people in Samaria to whom He revealed Himself? Who would you have chosen?

B. LIVING WATER

B1. Given the following, do you think the woman and the townspeople knew the implications of what Jesus said about "living water" in John 4:10-14?

- Isa 12:3 *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.* ESV
- Jer 2:13 *for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* ESV
- Jer 17:13 *. . . for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.* ESV
- Isa 55:1 *Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; . . .* ESV

B2. In this passage (4:10-14), who is giving the water and what is its significance?

C. APPLICATION

C1. Do you have His living water? Given the above understanding of living water, what does the following confirm?

Rev 7:16-17 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. ESV

C2. The townspeople confirmed their own personal belief after meeting Jesus. They did not depend on the woman's testimony alone. We must all have a personal encounter with Jesus to be born again. We enter the Kingdom not because of our family, our church, or by saying a prayer. We enter the Kingdom through a personal relationship with Christ. What is the status of your relationship?

C3. How effective is your testimony? Do you need to work on your story?

- How can you make your testimony more effective?
- Have you updated your story lately?
- Are you as excited about your testimony, as the woman at the well?
- Our only responsibility is to tell, so God can use our story.

C4. Who do you avoid or shun because of their reputation, lifestyle, social standing, geographic location, language, culture, health, denomination, race, or sexual orientation? Why?

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End