

The Woman of Samaria  
John 4.1-30; 39-42

1. Who do you know who is like this woman? Alternatively, give a short description of someone who is like this woman. An example from a scene or character in a movie would be great. What does she look like? What is her biggest concern? How does she vote? What is admirable about her? Objectionable? What does she love? Hate? What is her relationship with God?
2. What is her regard for Jesus in the first 20 verses? Flirtatious? Cautious? Confrontational? Contemptuous? What is the feeling tone of this conversation?
3. Why does Jesus "mess" with her? Isn't public interaction with her a prelude to trouble?
4. In Genesis on a couple of occasions patriarchs encountered their future wives at wells (Isaac and Jacob). Is there any matrimonial element in this lesson?
5. John's gospel repeatedly presents Jesus as supplanting or going beyond Jewish customs or beliefs. ("Destroy this temple and I will rebuild it in three days." The idea here is that Jesus is functionally the new temple). How is that theme operating in this passage?
6. Does the woman change? Describe what about her changes and why it has changed
7. How would you compare her faith with that of Nicodemus?
8. Elsewhere in the gospels, new disciples leave their work when they follow Jesus. (boats and nets, the tax office, Bartimeaus' begging cloak). Does the jar left at the well symbolize that she has become a disciple?
9. What are we learning about discipleship through this passage?
10. Using the language of literary characterization—is the woman from Samaria a foil for Nicodemus?
11. How could we have this study and conversation and "get it" and respond appropriately in our own lives?