

ENCOUNTERS

Woman at the Well

Growth Group Opener:

Have you ever made an assumption about someone that turned out not to be true? How did it change your interactions with or thoughts about them?

Read John 4:1-42, paying close attention to what is and is not said.

What stood out to you from this story?

Did anything surprise you or read differently than before?

Read v16-18 out loud. What tone does your voice take when you read it and why?

Compare v16-18 with John 8:1-11 and notice what Jesus does not say to her. How does this compare with how you've heard this moment or this story told before?

Jesus crosses social, religious, ethnic, and gender barriers to talk with this woman. What makes these barriers justifiable? How does Jesus' example challenge that?

In Sunday's message, we heard several possible explanations for her circumstances. How does it change the story to see that Jesus meets her without condemnation regardless of which explanation is true?

How might Jesus' example shape how we approach those around us?

Jesus tells her the truth about her own life without a word of condemnation. Where do you assume God is disappointed in you...perhaps in a way the text may not actually support? What might change if you believed that he meets you in the way he met her?

Read Colossians 4:5-6

How does Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well embody Paul's words from the passage in Colossians?

What might it look like to bring this same grace to your own conversations this week?

What can we learn about God from this story?

Is there anything you sense the Holy Spirit inviting you to look at more closely?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for meeting the woman in this story exactly where she was, and for meeting us exactly where we are. Help us to meet those around us in this same way, inviting them to taste of your grace and goodness through the way we care for them. In the name of Jesus, amen. H