



ENTER God's presence

**As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.**

-Psalm 42:1-2a

Lord Jesus Christ, you know our deepest thirst for love and life and you meet us at that need with an invitation to drink and be satisfied forever. Help us to drink deeply and often at the well of your living water that we might be satisfied by your grace, experience the joy of wholeness and be sustained to life eternal. Draw us deeper into that life now as we grow in grace together as your people. We ask this in your precious name. Amen.



SHARE life together

- 1. How have you seen Jesus at work in your life this week?**
- 2. Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?**
- 3. What are the things in your life that leave you feeling 'dry and thirsty'?**

Have you ever watched the spin cycle on the front loader of a washing machine? It starts off slow, builds in speed and intensity as the clothes are forced to the edge of the drum, ultimately all wrung out. That's anxiety in a nutshell...or guilt...or shame. It starts with a simple thought that goes round and round, spinning faster and faster, leaving you in a tight, on edge, wrung out knot! Sometimes the weight of that anxiety is so much, the whole machine of your body begins to shake, shudder and makes noise because it is so off kilter. Whatever spin cycle you are in right now – anxiety about the state of your world/lives, shame that you aren't who you are supposed to be according to some exacting standard, guilt that in this instance or that circumstance you messed up, let your guard down or let someone else down - Jesus wants you to know that he is not ashamed of you, disappointed in you or out to make an example of you. He knows you completely and loves you unceasingly, assuring you of his grace that is larger than your need and more abundant than all your fears. Come to Jesus and receive that life and experience that life today...a life beyond anxiety, guilt and shame.

Week beginning
Sunday 9th May 2021

Worship series:
Life Pulse



VEDGE for the week

Jesus 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."

John 18:37b



REMEMBER this week

Jesus knows everything about you and still loves you. He comes to free you from the patterns and habits that keep you living as anxious people and create a new cycle that is life giving, life renewing and life sustaining.



LISTEN attentively

Read John 4:1-26; 39-42

5. What do you find challenging/confusing/comforting about this text?
6. Have you ever been approached by someone who you thought would never talk to you? How did that make you feel?
7. Have you ever approached someone who you wouldn't normally talk to? Why did you talk to them? How did they react?
8. Life in this world can be busy and draining. Where do you find refreshment when you are exhausted?

The relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans is interesting. There was a centuries old feud that existed between the two. In 720 B.C. when the Assyrians invaded and captured Samaria, they resettled it with people from other nations who intermarried with the Jewish residents. To "true" Jews this loss of racial purity was an unforgivable crime. The southern kingdom, when invaded and carried off to Babylon, did not lose their identity and later these "pure" exiles returned to Jerusalem. They refused the help of the northern mixed Samaritan people to rebuild the temple and deep animosity ensued. This quarrel started about 450 B.C. and was still bitter in Jesus' time.

9. If you look at this encounter as an example of how to witness, or to share your faith with someone else, particularly someone with a grudge against religion, what are some principles or guidelines you observe at work here in what Jesus said and did?
10. When Jesus started connecting at a deeper level with the woman, she tried to deflect the question by asking something else (John 4:14-16). Why do we, like the woman at the well, try to dodge or dance around difficult questions?

We all have things that we are ashamed about or feel guilt over; things which we are anxious others not find out about. We can spend so much time and energy trying to cover our tracks and putting on a brave front to the rest of the world that it leaves us feeling drained and depleted, unable to imagine or experience the fullness of life that we have in Jesus.

11. Have you ever experienced the relief of a problem shared with someone else? Share.
12. Why is it so important to us to ensure that others don't ever know those things about us which we are so ashamed of?
13. What is the underlying problem or emotion that can stop us from being completely real with one another?



GROW deeper

Drawing water from the well in the middle of the day was not the usual practice. Usually people would go to the well, in the cool of the morning and draw the water they needed for the day. The fact that Jesus meets this woman at the well around midday, suggests that this woman was avoiding the rest of her community, that she had something to hide or was somehow an outsider in her community.

Yet, after she has her encounter with Jesus, and he has revealed to her both who *he* really is and who *she* really is, her attitude towards her community seems to change dramatically. Instead of hiding from them she runs off to tell them about her encounter and about this man who told her everything she had done.

14. How have your encounters with Jesus in your life changed your attitudes and relationships with others?
15. Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman progresses from "I see you, I know you, I love you, and you belong to me." To what degree have you experienced that same progression in your own life?



LIVE purposefully

In light of Jesus, his life death and resurrection, we have assurance that we are seen for what we are, known for who we are, loved despite who we are, and accepted not because of what we've done, but because of the love and grace of Christ. The fear and anxiety that most of us tend to live with about being 'found out' is no longer necessary because there is one who knows all about us, and loves and accepts us as his children regardless of what we have done, or how we feel about ourselves. We now have freedom in him to be who we are, free of the fear and anxiety that often assaults us from the world and it's opinions because the God of all creation says he loves you and has show his love for you in the sacrifice of his one and only son, Jesus Christ , for your sake.

- 16. Whose opinion has been most important to you in your life so far? Who have you been trying to impress?**
- 17. How does life look different when you realise you have no need to impress anyone, including God?**
- 18. What are some ways you might be able to take an ordinary conversation about everyday things to a deeper conversation about Jesus and the things of God?**
- 19. Jesus took the initiative to initiate a discussion with the Samaritan woman. Who will you take the initiaive with in the coming week to have a discussion with about Jesus?**



PRAY intentionally

- Praise God for his love that crosses all cultural, social, religious and ethnic boundaries. Thank Jesus for always being there at your point of deepest need with an invitation to drink his life giving water. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal those deep thirsts of the soul that you are trying to satisfy.
- Ask God to open doors and give you wisdom to speak to others about spiritual issues and the Gospel and ask him to open the hearts of the people you are talking to about Jesus.
- Pray for boldness to live free of the cycle of anxiety, guilt and shame and the need to impress others by being something you are not.
- Praise God for Pastor David's acceptance of the LifeWay Illawarra call, that God would bless his ending of ministry in Qld and transition to LifeWay, and for Pastor Vibol as they begin to sink the new wells in Por Pich and provide food relief for those struggling in the pandemic.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

[Name], Jesus loves you and seeks after you. Amen.