

Everyone, everywhere

This session can be used as part of all age worship. It is based on the story of the women at the well (John 4:4-9 or you could use the longer passage 4:1-26) and how the charity WaterAid plans to get clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to everyone, everywhere within a generation.

You will need:

- A bowl of sweets
- A coin
- Paper water droplets
- Pens

Slide 1: Start by showing your congregation the contents of the sweet bowl. Ask for volunteers who would like to come up and get a sweet. Ask your volunteers to form a line and explain to them that they each have one chance to win a sweet! Let the volunteers know that you will toss a coin, if it lands on heads they can take a sweet but if it lands on tails they will have to return to their seat empty handed. Afterwards, ask the volunteers who didn't get a sweet to explain how they feel. Was the game fair? Now ask the volunteers who did receive a sweet how they felt? (You may wish to hand out the treats to those who missed out later in the session).

Slide 2: Now read John 4:4-9, or ask a volunteer to. Explain that the story tells us that whilst in Samaria, Jesus went to a well at midday and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink. To Christians, this is important because it is seen as a radical act against the culture of the day. It is believed to be radical because;

- Men were not supposed to speak to women they didn't know
- Jews were not supposed to eat or drink with Samaritans
- Normally, women would draw water in the cooler parts of the day. If a woman was drawing water at midday it suggested she was an outcast and unwelcome even in Samaritan society.

Explain that just as the volunteers who didn't receive sweets thought the game was unfair, the story of the woman at the well shows how some people are treated unfairly in their own community. Explain that Christians believe Jesus' actions show we should care for those in need and for those rejected by society.

Ask your congregation if they know of any examples from recent history of people who have been treated unfairly or discriminated against?

The story from John 4 isn't the only time that Jesus is shown to help marginalised people in the Bible. Explain to your congregation that there are actually many different passages where this happens, for example Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10, the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Mark 5:24-34), and Matthew the tax collector (Matthew 9:9-13). Christians believe Jesus thought everyone should be treated equally, without prejudice.

Slide 3: Explain that this session is all about WaterAid, a charity working with some of the world's poorest communities. They are determined to ensure everyone, everywhere has clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. They believe that everyone should and will have these basic essentials regardless of their gender, disability or lack of wealth.



In many communities around the world certain groups, often those who are marginalised, suffer more than others due to lack of clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. The time consuming and tiring task of collecting water often falls to women and girls, meaning they miss out on the chance of an education or to earn an income. In some countries, only wealthier communities have taps and toilets, and when toilet facilities exist they don't always take into account the needs of those with disabilities. WaterAid is working hard to make sure that everyone, everywhere has clean water close to their homes and the use of decent toilets that suit their needs.

Slide 4: People like Saidson Robson Bruno (pictured), 33, who lives in Morondava commune, Madagascar. Saidson is a wheelchair user and in the past he has felt marginalised and excluded from everyday life: "I have lived in the region since I was very young. Before, people living with disabilities had to hide themselves, they were not able to stand up and raise their voice."

WaterAid has been worked in Morondava since 2014, running workshops and training sessions with communes in the city in collaboration with local partners and authorities to encourage a more inclusive approach to access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

The impact of these sessions has been life-changing. The municipality now understands the importance of recognising the rights of everyone, including those in the community living with disabilities. People living with disabilities now have access to accessible sanitary blocks, and have a role in decision-making with the local authorities.

Life for Saidson has now completely changed. "Having been trained in human rights with WaterAid, it has changed the lives of people living with disabilities.

One of the biggest changes that I have noticed is the relation between disabled people and the local government because



they consider people living with disabilities. When we meet them, there is a reciprocal respect because they see us as human beings. They listen to us and we talk to each other. When we need something, we go there and they open their doors and they try to solve the problem with us."

Slide 5: Just as the story of the Samaritan woman at the well shows Christians how important it is to treat people equally. WaterAid is working hard to make sure people like Saidson are included fully in their projects and get life-changing water and decent toilets along with everyone else in the community.

You could end your session by handing out a water droplet to each of the congregation and asking them to each write a prayer or reflection on the stories they have heard today. They can take these home and hang them near a tap so they think of the stories every time they use clean water.

You could use this session alongside a collection towards WaterAid's work. If you would like Gift Aid envelopes, please contact our Supporter Care team on 020 7793 4954.

