

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.

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.

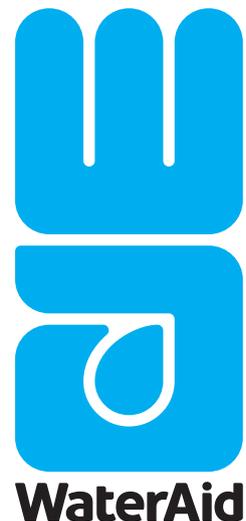
Ask your congregation if they know of any examples from recent history of people who have been treated unfairly or discriminated against?

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.

You will need:

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



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 Eduardo, 48, who lives with his family in Wawa Bar, a community in Nicaragua. Eduardo lost his left arm in an accident on a fishing boat and he couldn't go back to work on the boat straight away so he would help out at home. One of the tasks was to collect the water his family needed. However, the nearest water source was 30 minutes away and Eduardo would have to do this trip at least three times a day. It was very difficult for him to make this journey and to carry the water he collected back home. It would take him most of the day and his four children would often have to help him out. There was little time for him to do anything else to help his recovery.

The water the family relied on wasn't clean. Eduardo's young children were often sick from drinking it and they would miss school because of it. But everything changed when WaterAid installed rainwater harvesting tanks in Wawa Bar. Eduardo's family were amongst the first to receive their tank and a bathroom which gave Eduardo his dignity.

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 who would be happy to help.



Life for Eduardo has completely changed, he has now returned to work and has been able to buy his own fishing boat, giving him a chance to earn money and save to support his children in the future. He says: 'The task of collecting water is easier and less time consuming now. Having the bathroom in our home is also a great help, we no longer face any difficulties if we have to use the bathroom at night. It's been seven years since I had my accident and it took a long time for me to recover both mentally and physically. I met some people along the way that really helped me reflect and grow from the accident. I feel lucky to be working now. I didn't have time to work before but now after the projects I do and I feel so much better.'

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 Eduardo 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.