

Belonging: 5 Keys to Unlock Your Potential as a Disciple

Week 2: Wonder

Overview

John 4: 1-42 - The Woman at the Well

Week 1: John 4:1-6 - Intro and Discomfort

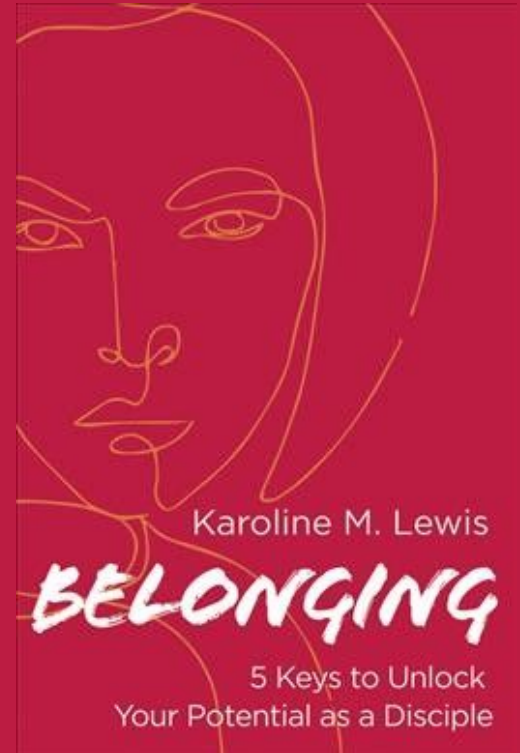
Week 2: John 4: 7-15 - Wonder

Week 3: John 4: 16-24 - Trust

Week 4: John 4: 25-30 - Letting Go

Week 5: John 4: 31-42 - Witness

THESIS: Discipleship is less about doing and more about belonging.





Recap: Discomfort

- John 4:4- “But he HAD to go through Samaria.”
- “Going to Sychar is an essential part of faith if we are to realize fully what it means that God so loved the world, and especially if you have forgotten how much God loves you. ‘It is necessary to go through Samaria’ to find ourselves once again and to be found again by the one who loves us so much.”

I wonder...

Who is your biblical person?

“That character who embodies for us what believing in God looks like and feels like. In them:

- +we see aspects of ourselves
 - +better able to articulate what faith means in our own lives
 - +gain a better sense of who God is calling us to be
 - +see who God is because God showed up in their lives”
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Focus Verses: John 4:7-15

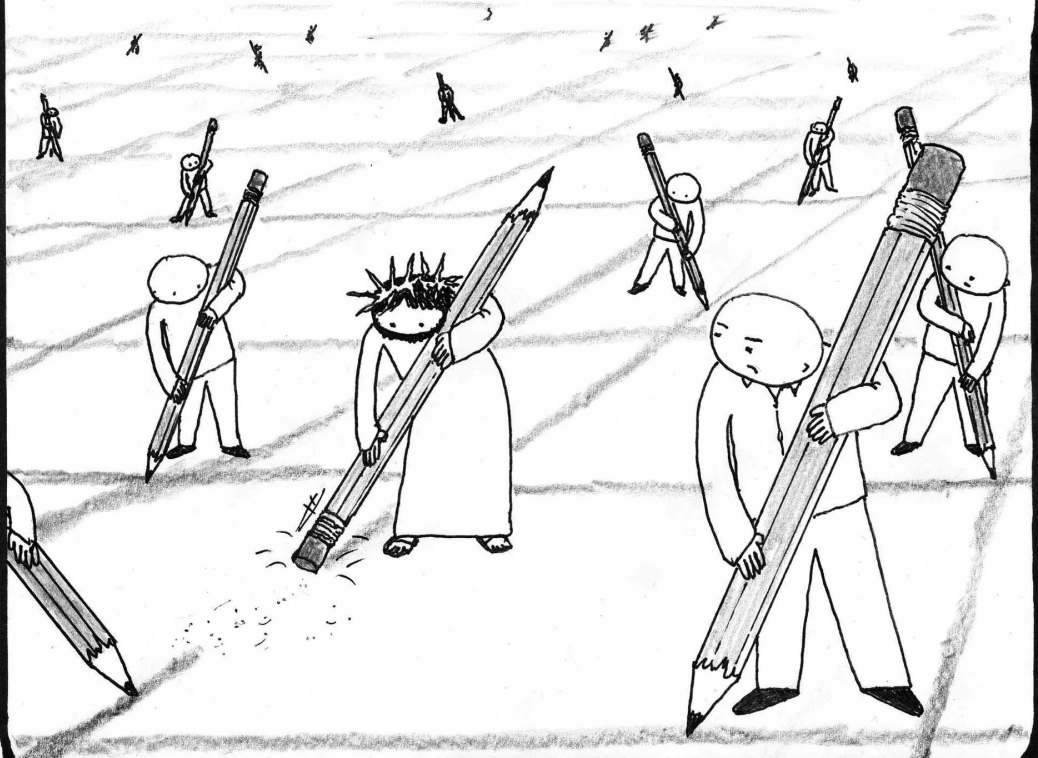
7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.'
8(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) 10Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' 11The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?' 13Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.' 15The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.'

The Conversation Begins: John 4:7

- Women were required to fetch water twice a day - usually at dawn and dusk - so why was she there at noon?
 - NO basis for “sinful” woman stereotype; Jesus doesn’t condemn or forgive her sins
 - Time of day indicates possibility and purpose, NOT prejudice and prejudgement
 - What will she see in Jesus - and what Jesus will see in her - when the light is the brightest, when neither can hide in shadows?
- Truth of his identity when he is thirsty - God in the *flesh*
- Jesus is first to speak, setting aside societal norms; boundary crossing is just beginning!
 - Societal: man never alone with a woman other than his wife
 - Political: Jews // Samaritans
 - Cultural & religious: rabbi never alone with a woman

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Keyboard



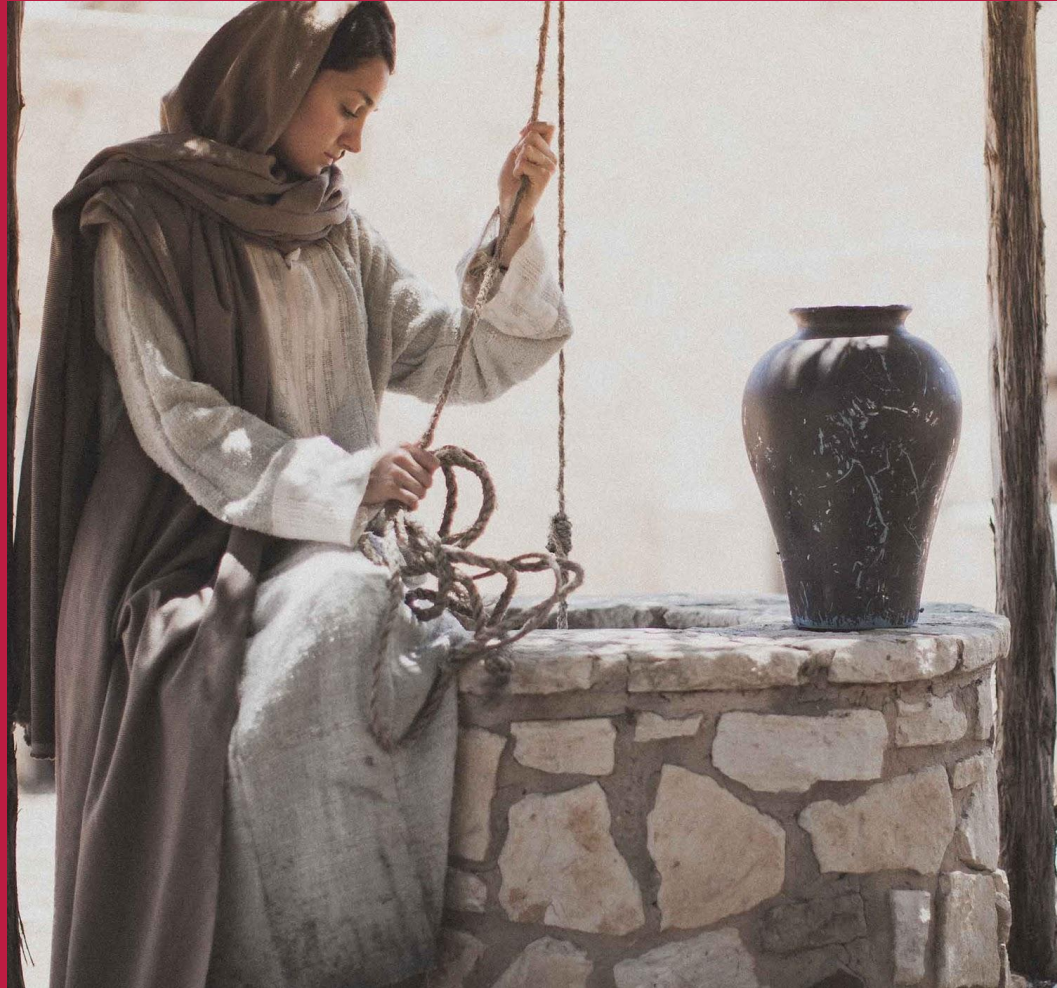
“Thinking is difficult, that’s why most people judge.” - Carl Jung

- What are the borders in your life?
- What borders are for safety, and which ones are for separation?
- Have you ever instantly judged and shut down a conversation?

The Scandal of it All: John 4:8-10

- She calls it out: John 4:9
 - For a Jew - contact with Samaritans would render them ritually unclean (not about hospitality or sharing your abundance)
 - No one has ever let her forget her own place - not worthy of address, outsider, unclean, reviled (to Jews)
- Answers on literal level like Nicodemus: where's your bucket?
- Not Jesus being antagonistic but invitational; misunderstanding leads to conversation that leads to relationship - a Jesus meetcute!
- Part of being a disciple is to step into the relationship, continually, no matter what and not waiting for graspable explanations. Conversation is a critical component; will we know God better through learning conversation?

- Have you ever wondered to God: “How can you be talking to me? How can I possibly be worth your time?”
- When have you felt trapped by societal expectations?
- What are expectations that we live up to - where do they come from?
- Are there times you’ve been told to stay in your lane?



The Scandal of it All: John 4:12-15

- Nicodemus stuck on literal answer; woman asks, “Just who do you think you are?!”
- Well was a source of water and life for Jacob - is Jesus greater than him?
- It's not the sign (water) but what the sign points to - Jesus is the source, which leads to a relationship with him and God that will never be broken
- Wells vs underground spring
 - Wells dry up
 - Underground spring - Old Faithful - doesn't
 - Greek word for bubbles up - ongoing reality, perpetual state



- What are your excuses to God?
 - The well is too deep.
 - I'm too old. *laughs*
 - I'm bad at public speaking.
 - I'm too young.
 - Here I am, Lord (send somebody else.)
 - Do I crawl into my mom's womb?
 - You don't have a bucket.

Abundance

- Recognition of Jesus' identity happens in and through abundance - life abundant:
 - John 2 - wedding at Cana
 - John 5 - healing of paralyzed man
 - John 6 - feeding of five thousand
 - John 9 - healing of blind man
 - John 11 - raising of Lazarus
 - John 21 - lots of fish

John 4:14-15

- Jesus offering the woman what she needs - water - but also so much more - life abundant.
- Progressing in her view of him:
 - Thirsty Jew with bad manners →
 - Jesus has something she needs →
 - ??
- Literal response: “give me this water!” - expression and recognition that this Jewish man has something she needs - that he can fulfill a longing that is beyond her chores.



- When have you felt totally tapped out - drawing from a dry well?
- What do you do in those situations?
- Who can help fill your well?

Wonder

- Jesus wants her (and us) to come to a recognition of who He is.
- Jesus also wants her (and us) to come to a recognition of who we are - enough.
- Jesus has something she needs - not just the water that is her chore but something that will get her *through* the day - the relationships for which she longs.
- She asks, questions, wonders.

Wonder

- Openness and wonder are hugely important in faith.
- A signpost before Bible stories: “Questions and curiosity encouraged.”
- To ask is risky - more risky than memorizing creeds.
- To admit that you can't do it alone is to admit that you don't want to be alone. But that's what relationship is all about. And that's what God most desperately wants - and with YOU.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, when the well is deep, and we are oh so tired; when the well is deep and there is not a drop left; when the well is deep, and the answers are not there; help us to lean into wonder. To voice questions we've been too afraid to ask: remind us of this woman's curiosity and openness to possibility. Help us remember that a simple request is perhaps all that's necessary. "Jesus, Jesus? Give me that water," and who knows what might follow? Well, you do - life abundant. Amen.
