

HOPE

LIVING WITH CONFIDENT EXPECTATION

FAMILY CONNECTION GUIDE

WEEK 5

READ

JOHN 4:4-10, 39-42, CEB

"Jesus had to go through Samaria. He came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, so he sat down at the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." His disciples had gone into the city to buy him some food. The Samaritan woman asked, "Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.) Jesus responded, "If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water."

...Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman's word when she testified, "He told me everything I've ever done." So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. Many more believed because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is truly the savior of the world."

REFLECT

Through Jesus we have hope that our stories are still being written, and this hope compels us to share our story with others. What would you say is the best part of the story being written about you? What is the best way for you to share this with others?

REMEMBER

Did you watch any of the Marvel Movies? There are lots of them: *Iron Man*, *Captain America*, *Hulk*, *Thor* and more. Did you know that the Marvel Franchise is worth more than \$4 billion? Why?! Why did so many people pay to go see all those movies? Here's a theory: they are stories we want to hear. They are stories that relate to all of us. Of course, we don't have superpowers and all that jazz, but we do have struggles in life and a desire to stand up for what we believe in and live for something bigger than ourselves (even though sometimes we feel unworthy).

The Bible tells story after story of broken people changing the world. Guess what? We are those people as well. We are challenged as Christians to embrace our stories of brokenness along with the power we have to change the world — all because we have been redeemed by the grace of God. The Bible also proclaims the story of Jesus' brokenness for the sake of all people, and the power of God's redemption of the world through Jesus then, now and in the future.

Like the story from John 4, when we share our personal stories of how Jesus moved in our lives, it moves others. Sharing our own stories is an important next step in our faith. We aren't meant to keep them to ourselves. Our stories of hope can help others! Just like when you heard how much Jesus changed someone else's story and you were changed, your story can do the same for someone else.

RESPOND

- Who is a good storyteller in your life? What makes this person such a good storyteller?
- How did you first encounter Jesus? Did someone share their story with you? Did someone share the story of Jesus with you?
- Read together **Luke 5:18-26**. Do you think the paralyzed man in the story had much hope before he met Jesus? Why or why not?
- In this story from Luke, we often call the men who carried their friend on the cot to Jesus "stretcher-bearers." Who are the "stretcher-bearers" in your life that carry you when you need hope?
- Of the two stories read today, which main character do you relate to more: the Samaritan woman from John or the paralyzed man from Luke? How did each of their stories change after they encountered Jesus?
- How does it feel knowing that your story is not over and is still being written?
- What is your family's story? Where did you come from, and where is God moving you together as your stories intersect?

PARENT TIP

Sharing our stories can be a powerful—but scary—experience, especially for teenagers in a world where Christians are increasingly in the minority. It takes courage to be vulnerable and to trust others with our stories. If possible, model courage, vulnerability and trust for your teen and provide them with an example of what sharing a story looks like: tell about a time in your own life when Jesus changed your story, met you where you were, and brought hope into your life. What is most personal is most universal. Our stories of Jesus' impact on us personally will speak the loudest to others (especially our kids).