

Get Ready!

Living Water

By: Jennifer Wetzel



Text

John 4:1-30, John 4:39-42 (NIV)

Key Quest Verse

“Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” John 4:13-14 (NIV)

Bible Background

The opening prologue of the gospel of John sets forth the purpose for John’s writings, which is to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah and Son of God. Furthermore, John 20:30-31 states “Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” Though scholars debate the date at which the gospel of John was written, many feel that the primary intention of the writings was evangelistic. John’s aim was to provide witness of Jesus’ ministry and miracles, in order to win others to Christ while building up current believers.

The first eleven chapters of the gospel of John describe Jesus’ public ministry. It is here, in the fourth chapter, that we find the story of Jesus speaking with the Samaritan woman at the well. Prior to this event, Jesus had spent time in the Judean countryside with His disciples. Since their success in baptism aroused opposition in the Pharisees, Jesus found it necessary to leave the countryside to return to Galilee, which led them through Samaria, a hostile area often avoided by traveling Jews. While journeying, Jesus grew weary and rested by the site of Jacob’s well while His disciples left to find food. At this location, He spoke with the Samaritan woman.

The woman at the well has become a well-known Bible story because in it, Jesus breaks traditional protocol. First, He, a Jew, spoke with a Samaritan. Ordinarily, the two groups had no dealings together. Secondly, men in Jewish society usually avoided women in order to prevent impropriety. Third, Jesus requested that she give Him a drink of water from her vessel. As Jews considered Samaritans unclean, to drink from her vessel would have made Him ceremonially unclean. By breaking social conventions and traditions, Jesus was able to present the gospel in a straightforward manner. In addition, He used natural circumstances, the water, to teach the spiritual lesson of salvation and eternal life. He explained to her that He brings “living water” to convey His message to her in a manner to which she could relate. It did not have the overtones in Samaria that it had in Judea.

*Get Ready!***Bible Background Cont.**

Throughout their conversation, Jesus revealed details of her personal life to her and the Samaritan woman wondered if He is a prophet. Later in the conversation, the Samaritan woman became argumentative regarding the proper place of worship, since the matter was much debated between the two groups. While Jews worshipped in Jerusalem, Samaritans held that Mount Gerizim was sacred since both Abraham and Jacob had built altars in the vicinity. Jesus explained to her that the place of worship is irrelevant because true worship is the spirit and truth in which worship is offered. Then, He revealed that He is the Messiah for which she is waiting. This is the only occasion before his trial that Jesus specifically stated that He is the Messiah, most likely since the term did not have the overtones in Samaria that it had in Judea.

After speaking with Jesus, the Samaritan woman testified to others in her community. Drawn to Jesus by her testimony, they learned from His stay and their faith becomes grounded in the Savior. Throughout this story, we see that Jesus used natural circumstances to draw believers to salvation and offer them the gift of eternal life.

Get Ready!

Lesson Quest

What I want my students to:

Know: That the only way to gain salvation and eternal life is to accept Christ's gift of living water and accepting Jesus as their Savior

Feel: Assurance that all sins can be forgiven by accepting Jesus as their Savior

Do: Spread the message of Christ and the gift of living water to others, just as the Samaritan woman invited her community to come to Christ

Leader's Devotion

Secrets. The word itself is alluring, conveying a sense of an enigma. In fact, the *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines a secret as "a mystery; something kept from the knowledge of others." Though secrets take on overtones dependent on the situation in which they are made, keeping a secret is often difficult. Most people enjoy being the first to know news, especially good information. Think about how hard it is to keep a good secret to yourself, such as a great Christmas present or a job promotion! Why would we want to withhold great information from others as a secret?

What is especially noticeable in the story of the woman at the well is that no one kept a secret. Let's consider the situation. Jesus was a stranger in the land of a nationality hostile to His own race but neither was He always welcome in His own country. He was thirsty, tired from the long, dusty journey, and let His disciples leave to search for food, leaving him alone. In a situation as this, we would all understand if Jesus did not share the gospel message. He could have kept quiet for His safety, his peace, and for protection. Instead, He uses every opportunity to witness to others and let them know about His gift of salvation and eternal life. He never kept His gift a secret.

In addition, the woman at the well does not keep a secret. Imagine her shock and surprise due to this complete stranger! Can you imagine being approached by a strange man only to have Him recount your innermost secrets and sins to you? Embarrassment would surely replace the shock. How could you tell people that someone knew all of your secrets and misdeeds? Yet, the Samaritan woman ran back to her community, sharing the news of Christ with everyone. She declared to them that He knew her life history and surely must be the Messiah. Sharing the good news, she did not keep the living water a secret from anyone.

If this people did not keep secrets, why do we? Do we let circumstances and emotions prevent us from sharing the gospel with others? Jesus and the woman at the well show us that there is no excuse for not sharing our news of salvation. It is our job to share the good news with everyone in all situations. Why keep this good news a secret?

Get Set!

Option A

Washing Away Our Sins

Materials: Piece of fabric, water-soluble fabric marking pencil (use a color that shows up on the color of the fabric), damp washcloth

Procedure: Hold up fabric for students to see. **“Isn’t this a pretty piece of material? When I look at it, I see so much potential for a quilt or dress.”** Hold up fabric marking pencil.

“Before I cut the material, I want to draw a pattern on it.” Use the pencil to draw a shape, such as a flower or circle on the material. As you draw, be sure to make an obvious mistake.

“Oh, no! I made a mistake! Look at that crooked line. It doesn’t look good with the rest of my drawing. I wonder if my material is ruined. Maybe I can wash off that line.” Use the damp washcloth to gently wipe away your drawing. **“Oh good, my material is still okay! This material represents each of us. In God’s eyes, we are each a pretty, valuable creation with potential on what we will become. Just like my crooked line, we sin and make mistakes that seem to ruin our lives. However, the water washed away that crooked drawing. We can wash away the mistakes on our lives too. If we accept the gift of living water, we can find forgiveness and have eternal life in God’s Kingdom. Then, the material of our lives will be pretty again.”** Have each child mark on the fabric to represent mistakes that they have made. Then, allow each child to use the washcloth to wash away their marks.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B

Materials: Withered, dying plant, watering bucket, water

Procedure: Bring a withered, dying plant to show your Sunday School class. Make sure that the plant is not completely dead, just suffering from a lack of water. Use a type of plant, such as a philodendron, that will perk up within a few days after being watered. Show the plant to your students. **“My plant seems to be dying. I just don’t know how to care for it. So, I thought that I would bring it to class to see if you had any ideas on how I could care for it. Do you know what things a plant needs to stay alive?”** Give the students time to list such items as sun, water, dirt, etc. **“Let’s see, who can help me out? Let’s make sure that this plant has all of those items.”** Have the students place the plant in a sunny area in the classroom and check items off their list of needed items. Save watering for last. **“You know, we haven’t given this plant any water yet. Do you think that will help this plant perk up?”** Have the students water the plant. Then, explain that you will leave the plant in the classroom for the students to tend and observe throughout the unit. **“Let’s watch over the next few weeks to see if that water helps my plant revive. Maybe my plant was just thirsty. I know that I get thirsty a lot. And when I feel like wilting, I just drink some more water. In today’s Bible text, Jesus talks about ‘living water.’ He said that whoever drinks of His water will never thirst again. I think that I would like that kind of water! Let’s read to find out what He was talking about.”**

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

To introduce students to the text of the lesson, first have them read John 4:1-30; 39-42 independently. Then, assign parts and have students conduct a dramatization of today's Bible story.

Characters

Jesus
Disciples
Samaritan Woman
Townspople

Props

Bucket of water
Posterboard drawn to look like a stone well (place around bucket of water)
Chair (set next to the well)
Empty bucket
Dipper

Skit

Jesus and disciples enter the room. When they enter the room, the disciples leave Jesus and cross to other side of room to represent them leaving to search for food. Jesus should cross to the well and sit down in the chair, as if resting.

Samaritan woman, with empty bucket and dipper in hand, approaches the well from the opposite direction. She should begin drawing water from the full bucket using the dipper and emptying it into her bucket.

Jesus: Will you give me a drink?

Samaritan Woman: You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can You ask me for a drink?

Jesus: 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.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?

Get Set!



Bible Story cont.

Jesus: Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.

Jesus: Go, call your husband and come back.

Samaritan Woman: I have no husband.

Jesus: You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.

Jesus: Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Samaritan Woman: I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.

Jesus: I who speak to you am He.

The Samaritan woman should run toward the townspeople, who are clustered nearby.

Samaritan Woman: Come, see the man at the well! He told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?

The crowd should run to the well and sit at Jesus' feet. They should appear to ask Him questions about His teachings and the living water.

Everyone: We know that this is the Christ! We believe what you told us and accept the gift of living water!

Go!

Literature Link

LITERATURE

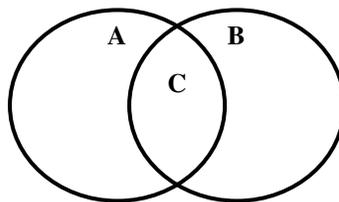
Materials: Bible, *All You Ever Need* by Max Lucado (available at public libraries and bookstores), two hula-hoops, index cards, masking tape

Quest Connection

In the lesson text and key verse, students learn that Jesus offers the gift of living water, through which we find redemption and eternal life, to everyone, regardless of their sins. In this book by Max Lucado, they will also see through a parable that Jesus offers this living water freely to everyone and that we should not withhold it from anyone. Students should learn that until Christ’s return, we are responsible for offering the living water freely to others.

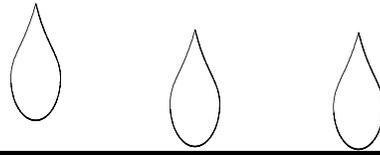
Procedure: Prior to students’ arrival, tape the hula-hoops to the floor in the shape of a Venn diagram (two overlapping circles—see diagram below) If hula-hoops are not available, the Venn diagram can be drawn on the chalkboard. When students arrive, read today’s lesson text and *All You Ever Need* by Max Lucado to the students. Then, explain that today, you will be comparing these two stories using a Venn diagram. **“Today, we’re going to compare both of these stories. In one outer section of the two overlapping circles (section A), we will list things that are unique to the Bible story of the woman at the well. In the other outer section (section B), we will list facts that are only in the story by Max Lucado. The space where the circles overlap (section C) is where we will list ideas and traits that are in both stories. For example, both stories contain wells and water. Both also contain Jesus giving away water. Let’s see how many ideas and facts we can put in our Venn diagram.”**

Pass out index cards to the students and have them write one fact per card. As students finish writing their facts, they can tape them in the appropriate place in the Venn diagram. Help the students brainstorm ideas. When they are finished, have a class discussion about the similarities and differences between the two stories. Emphasize the fact that in both stories, Jesus freely gave “water” to those who want it. Compare this to His gift of eternal life and salvation. Also point out that in His absence, we should share the water with others, not like the characters in *All You Ever Need*.



Close

Have each student list one thing that they learned in today’s lesson. Then, close with prayer.

Go!**Fill My Cup****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

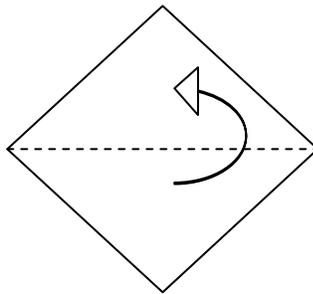
Materials: Blue construction paper, raindrop pattern (see last page), markers, scissors, white construction paper

Quest Connection

Students are learning that Jesus offers living water. Through this activity, they will have an opportunity to memorize the Key Quest Verse for future reference and comfort. They will visually learn about Jesus' gift of living water by connecting it with a natural element.

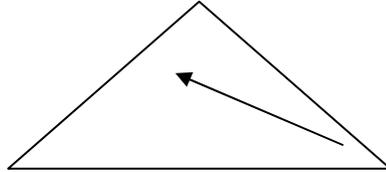
Procedure: Before class, make one copy of the raindrop pattern for each student. In class, have each student cut out a raindrop pattern and trace it nine times on a sheet of blue construction paper. Students will cut out the blue raindrops and write the Key Quest Verse and reference on the raindrops. Write a different phrase of the verse on each water droplet, such as **Jesus answered – Everyone who drinks this water – will be thirsty again – but whoever drinks the water – I give him will never thirst. – Indeed, the water I give him – will become in him a spring of water – welling up to eternal life. – John 4:13-14.** Then, distribute the white construction paper to the students. Have each student cut one piece of paper into a square. Use the instructions below to help them fold their paper into a cup to hold their memory verse water droplets.

Step one. Hold paper like a diamond and fold in the middle so that the points meet.

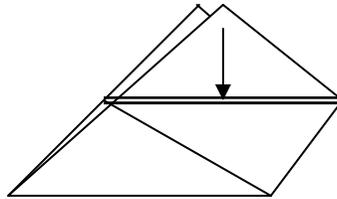


Go!

Step two. Fold one corner of the triangle to meet the other side approximately 1/3 from the top.



Step three. Take one section of the top and fold it into the pocket formed from the folded corner.



Step four. Turn paper over to the other side. Repeat steps two and three.

After students have constructed their memory verse water droplets and paper cups, have them practice memorizing the memory verse. Mix up their water droplets and have them put them in the correct order for you.

Close

Have the class recite the memory verse together. Close with prayer. **“Dear Lord, Thank you for sending Your Son to offer us the gift of living water. Help us to remember that we can have eternal life by accepting this gift. May we thirst no more. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”**

Go!**Christian Commercials****VIDEO**

Materials: Bibles, blank videotapes, camcorder, television, VCR

**Quest Connection**

In this unit, students are learning to share the gift of living water with others. Just as the Samaritan woman ran to share the good news with her community, we want to tell the news to our friends and family. Students will learn the value of the living water by trying to persuade others to accept the gift.

Procedure: At the beginning of class, have students read John 4:1-42 to review the story of the woman at the well. Talk to the class about the importance of sharing the news of living water with others. Use the Samaritan woman as an example. **“It is important to tell others about Jesus’ gift of living water. Look at the Samaritan woman. After she discovered that she had talked to the Messiah, she ran to tell her community and begged them to come see the man at the well. She was excited, and so the community listened to her enthusiasm. Then, they all listened to Christ speak and became believers. That’s what we need to do. We need to let others see our joy and excitement about being Christians so that they will want to experience that same joy. We need to offer them the living water. Let’s think about ways that people can spread news today.”**

Have students brainstorm how information is spread in our society. Encourage them to think about the media. **“That’s right, television is one of the most common ways that information is spread today. When people want others to buy something, they make a commercial. Well, we want others to receive living water, so let’s make commercials to tell them about it!”**

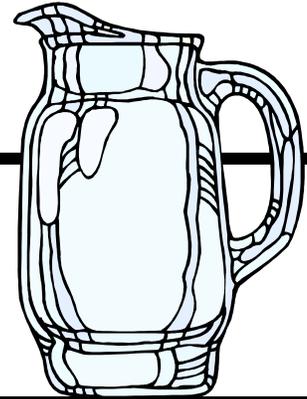
Divide the students into groups of three or four. Have each group write a script and assemble props for making a commercial about living water. Encourage them to explain what the product is (living water), the benefits (salvation and eternal life), and how to obtain it (ask Jesus). When each group is ready, videotape their commercial.

Close

Watch each commercial on living water with the class. Have each group summarize what they learned from the activity. Then, close with prayer. If possible, air the “commercials” during church service for others to see.

Go!**Share the Water****GAME**

Materials: Paper cups (one per child), pitchers (one per team)

**Quest Connection**

In this unit, students learned that the Samaritan woman ran to share the good news of living water with her community. Just as she shared the living water, so do we. We want to make others aware of Christ's gift of living water, and through it, eternal life, to everyone.

Procedure: Before class, write the memory verse on the chalkboard. Then, place a chair at one end of the room for every team. On the chair, place a pitcher of water and enough cups for each member of the team.

When students arrive to class, review with them the text of the lesson and what they have learned about sharing the living water. Allow time for students to discuss the meaning of living water and how to share it with others.

Divide the students into several small groups. Have them line up by teams opposite the side with the water pitchers and glasses. Explain to the students that the first child in the team will walk to the pitcher, pour a glass of water, and walk back to the group. Then, they should offer the glass of water to the next student in line and recite the memory verse (written on the chalkboard if they need prompting) to that student. The next student in line will drink the water. Then, they will walk to the water pitcher, pour a new glass of water, and return and recite the memory verse to the next student in line. This action is repeated until all students have had an opportunity to share the memory verse with their classmates.

When students have completed the share the water relay, encourage them to help you clean up the classroom. Then, have students brainstorm that they can offer a drink to people. In other words, what are ways they can witness for Jesus in their lives? How can they tell people about the living water?

Close

Have each student share one way in which they can witness to others this week. Then, close by singing "Fill My Cup, Lord."

Go!**Incredible Invitations****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Materials: Construction paper, scissors, glue, envelopes, stamps, pens or pencils, balloons, streamers, snacks

Quest Connection

Students have learned that it is important to share Christ’s living water with others. They have also been learning about ways they can witness to others. Just as the Samaritan woman ran to bring her community to hear Christ, our students will invite others to come hear His words.

Procedure: This activity should be done over the course of two weeks. Prior to the first week, have students bring the name and address of a friend to Sunday School. At the beginning of the first class, read John 4:39-42 to the students and discuss how the Samaritan woman invited others to come hear Christ. Explain that the class will be doing the same. **“Today, we are going to make invitations for our friends. We are going to invite them to come to our Sunday School class and hear Christ’s words. Next week, we will share our Bible story for them and have a party to celebrate how much Christ loves us!”** Have students construct invitations to their friends, address the envelopes, and mail the letters. You may also invite church members to the next class session, to ensure outside participation.

The second week of class, have class members introduce their guests. Then, have class members tell the guests what they have learned about living water. They could begin by performing a skit based on the Bible story and then show the audience other activities that they have completed. In addition, all class members and guests could participate in the share the water relay. Then, everyone can have time to enjoy the snacks—especially nice cold water!

Close

Have the students recite the Key Quest Verse together. Then, ask an attending church member to close with prayer.

Go!**Well Of Knowledge****SCIENCE**

Materials: Empty bucket, review questions, raindrop pattern, blue construction paper, magnets (type that attaches with adhesive), poster board well from Bible skit, poster board drawn to look like bucket, string, rod

Quest Connection

As students have been learning about living water, they learn about the benefits of living water and how to share it with others. This activity allows them to review what they have learned throughout the unit.

Procedure: Before class, write the following review questions (or your own review questions) on the blue construction paper. Use the raindrop pattern to cut them into water droplet shapes. Attach a magnet to the back of each review question. Place all review questions in the empty bucket. Then, place the posterboard well around the bucket of review questions, so that it looks like a well. This is your “Well of Knowledge.” Then, construct a bucket by using the string to attach your posterboard bucket to the rod. Attach a magnet to the back of the bucket.

When students arrive, explain that they will be drawing from the “Well of Knowledge.” Each student will take the bucket on a rod and dip it into the “Well of Knowledge.” When they lift the bucket out of the well, a review question should stick to the magnet on the back of the bucket (you may have to assist to ensure that this occurs.) Whatever question they draw from the well, they have to read to their classmates and then answer. Each student will have an opportunity to draw from the “Well of Knowledge.” Repeat the game as time permits or until running out of questions

Go!**Review Questions:**

Recite the Key Quest Verse.

What is living water?

What are the benefits of living water?

Who are the main characters in our Bible story?

Where were the disciples?

Name one thing that Christ told the Samaritan woman.

How did the Samaritan woman respond to Christ's comments?

Why was it odd for Christ to speak to this woman?

What did Christ ask the Samaritan woman for when she arrived?

Who did the Samaritan woman run to tell?

Who came to hear Christ speak?

Did Christ stay with the people and if so, for how long?

Name one thing we can learn from this lesson.

Name one way we can share living water.

Who can have living water?

Close

Allow the students time to ask any remaining questions they might have about this unit. Then, close with prayer. **“Heavenly Father, help us to remember that we can all have the gift of living water. We do not want to be thirsty anymore. Instead, we want to know Your peace. Thank You for this great gift. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”**

Coded Message

Directions: Use the key in the chart below to find out what the coded message is. Use the number under each line to check the key and find out which letter goes on that line. When you place the correct letter on each line, you'll have the hidden message!

1C 4C 5C 1B 5C 5C 3C 5A 4B

5B 7B 4A 4C 2C 4C 2A

4B 2A 5A 6B 3B 5C 3A 7B 4C

5B 3C 3A 4C 2A 5A 2B 5A 2C 4C

7B 5A 6A 5B 5A 6C 6C

6B 4C 2C 4C 2A 3A 7B 5A 2A 5C 3A

1C 4A 7B 6B 1A 7A 1A

SECRET CODE FOR THE MESSAGE

Code	1A	1B	1C	2A	2B	2C	3A	3B	3C	4A
Key	4	U	J	R	G	V	T	K	A	O
Code	4B	4C	5A	5B	5C	6A	6B	6C	7A	7B
Key	D	E	I	W	S	M	N	L	1	H

\$IGN\$ of \$UCCE\$\$

Directions: Rank the people described below from most successful to least successful. If you feel that two people are equally successful, rank them the same way. In the space between each person, explain why you ranked him or her the way you did. Remember, material success is not everything! When ranking these people, consider whether or not they have accepted Christ's gift of living water.

_____ **Angie** Angie makes \$35,000 a year as a high school teacher. She lives in a two-bedroom house with her husband and their dogs. Angie teaches Sunday School and Vacation Bible School at her church.

_____ **Diane** Diane makes \$200,000 a year as Vice-President of a department store. She drives a Porsche and lives in a four-bedroom house. Though she has lots of friends, she does not attend church or believe that Jesus is her savior.

_____ **Bob** Bob just got fired from his job as a banker because he did not know how to use the new computer system. He now lives with his parents because he cannot afford to pay rent on his apartment. He has accepted Jesus as his savior and is an usher at his church.

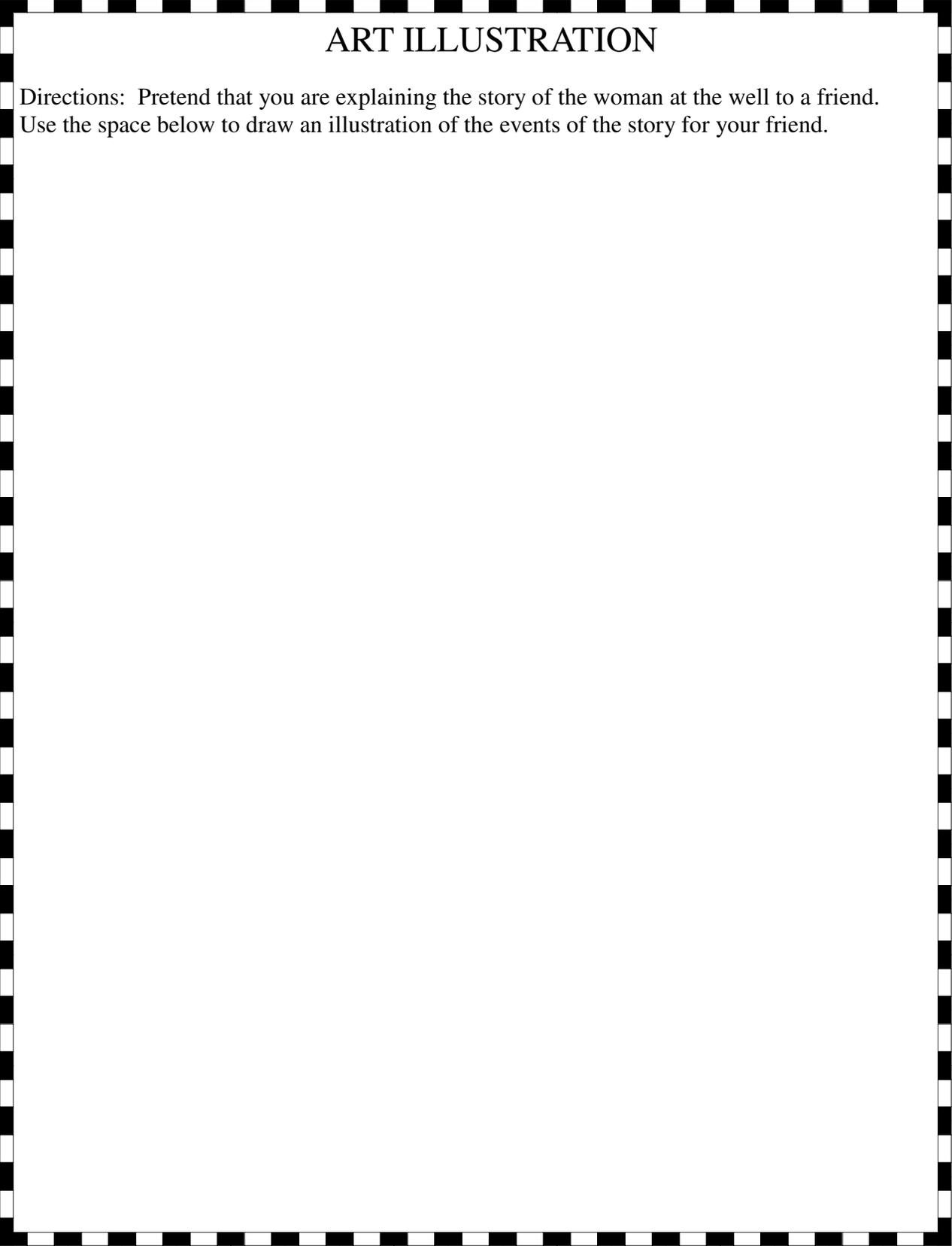
_____ **Mark** Mark makes \$2 million a year pitching for a major league baseball team. He and his family own houses in California and Florida. Drives a BMW, sings in his church choir, and has accepted Jesus as his savior.

_____ **Dawn** Dawn makes \$250,000 a year as Vice-President of an advertising company. She drives a Ford and lives in a modest home with her husband and two children. Though she attends church on a regular basis, she had not accepted Christ as her Savior.

_____ **John** John makes \$3 million a year as owner of an Internet company. He lives in a house in Florida with a pool and home movie theater. He has many friends. Does not believe in God.

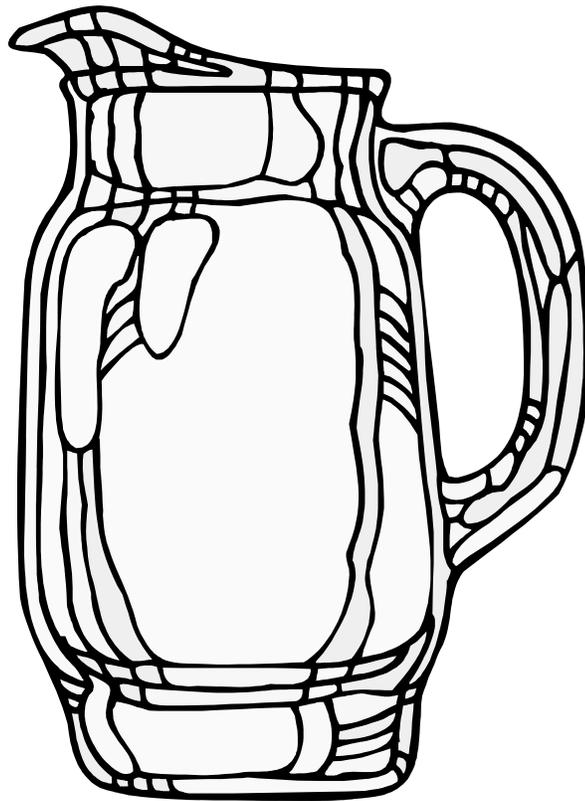
ART ILLUSTRATION

Directions: Pretend that you are explaining the story of the woman at the well to a friend. Use the space below to draw an illustration of the events of the story for your friend.



My Journal Page

Think about ways you can share “living water” with others.
Then, choose two of them and how you could do those things this week.
Describe them below.



Raindrop Pattern

