

SESSION 4 - OUR STORY (SAMARITAN VILLAGE)

READINGS: JOHN 4:39-42, COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

INTRODUCTION:

Well known author, Ernest Hemingway, won a bet to create a story only using 6 words - he managed to catch the reader's attention with 6 words that left the mind wandering what was happening, 'for sale: babies shoes. Never worn', putting him on the map of literature giants! As attention grabbing as his story was, it wasn't as powerful and impacting as the Samaritan woman's story of her personal encounter with Jesus (John 4:7-26) where 'people streamed out from the village to see Him'. Her story was simply 'come and see a man Who told me everything I ever did'...the impact was 'many Samaritans believed because of the woman's words'...we don't need to have all the answers to make a difference...

Stories catch people's attention - they're personal, powerful and profoundly impacting.

STARTER QUESTIONS:

- Can you tell the story of your life in just 6 words?
- what challenges/inspires you from the story in this reading?
- Research shows that 36% of people become Christians through conversations of faith - what experiences do you have of sharing your story with others?
- Why does God use imperfect stories?
- The Samaritan village was fully aware of the woman's reputation but her encounter was enough for them to listen, they knew there was something different about her - her village became her opportunity to tell her story
- Where is your village/sphere of influence? Who can we impact with our testimony? How could your story encourage someone struggling right now?

NEXT STEPS:

- You have a story, as do others - what can you do this next week to share your story and hear other people's?
- Could you write your story to be included in the Testimonies Book that is being put together? Send it to office@lungeatonoasis.co.uk

scan QR code to watch Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well



SESSION 5 - GOD'S STORY (NOT ENOUGH BOOKS)

READINGS: JOHN 20:30-31, JOHN 21:24-25, 2 COR 5:14-21

INTRODUCTION:

God's Story is Good News!

In John's final chapters, he reminds us that Jesus is resurrected, He restores and reveals Himself to be true and 'He did so many other things too that there's not enough books in the world to record them'...

God's story continues it's not just history, it's His-Story! Jared C. Wilson wrote in his book, The Storytelling God, 'Only God can write a story that resonates not just in the power of the imagination or the heart or the mind, but in the very soul; only God can write a story that brings dead things to life.'

QUESTIONS:

- what was your favourite childhood story book or Bible story?
- How is your life a continuation of God's story today?
- What do we learn about God's faithfulness to use imperfect people in His Story?
- Why do you think John included this affirmation at the end of the Gospel? What 'other things' has Jesus done in your life that could be added as part of His ongoing story?
- How does this closing statement challenge us to see that God's story is still unfolding through His people today?
- check out 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 - what key things depict God's Story in the passage?

NEXT STEPS:

- The final two verses in John serve as an open ending - they remind us that the story of God in Christ is too big to be contained in one book, we're invited to be part of it...and share it with others!
- Where do you see Jesus at work in your life or community right now that isn't written down anywhere? How could you celebrate or record it?
- Have conversations, share stories & give invitations!

scan QR code to take a listen to the words of the song - 'God Story'



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HAVE CONVERSATIONS
SHARE STORIES
GIVE INVITATIONS

REACH YOUR WORLD



SESSION 1 - WHO ME? (JOHN THE BAPTIST)

READINGS: JOHN 1:1-35, 2 COR 5:17-21

INTRODUCTION:

'Who me?' - we can all sometimes question our sense of identity, value, purpose and call...but let's be reminded of who we are in Christ! We see time and time again in the book of John, Jesus impacted the unlikely of the day - the leper, the adulteress, the blind and lame, the fisherman and tax collector...He called the broken, destitute, the unqualified, the rejected...He called a man who wore camel hair, ate locusts and wild honey and lived in the wilderness - John the Baptist! John was asked 3 times, in the passage, **'who are you?'** and his response revealed he knew who he was and the call on his life - he pointed to Who sent him and his voice was to point others to Jesus. John unashamedly shared the good news of Jesus Christ and in many ways is a role model for us as we look to share with others too!

QUESTIONS:

- **Ever play the game 'Guess Who' or 'Who am I'?**
- John was born to serve God and *'prepare the way of the Lord'* - what do you feel is your life mission?
- Was there a person in your life that pointed you to Jesus?
- How does the truth of Who Jesus is influence your own sense of identity?
- What ways could you be a signpost that points to Jesus for others?
- What challenges could you face in sharing your faith and how could an understanding of your identity in Christ help you overcome them?
- What do you learn about John, Jesus, in this passage, that you can apply to your life and faith?

NEXT STEPS:

- **consider the words of Ephesians 1:11-12 (MSG):**
'It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, He had His eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose He is working out in everything and everyone.'

scan QR code to take a listen to the song - 'Who You say I am'



SESSION 2 - AN INVITATION (NATHANAE)

READINGS: JOHN 1:35-51, EPH 5:16

INTRODUCTION:

A wedding, a party, a coffee with a friend...there's something special about receiving an invitation! Jesus invited 2 men to *'come and see'*, Philip was also invited by Jesus to *'come and follow'*...Philip then found Nathanael and invited him to *'come and see'* - and when he did he believed!

Jesus issues an invitation to us all and through the great commission (Matt 28:19) encourages us to go into the world to share that invitation too...maybe we could be a link in the chain to others making the greatest discovery just as Philip was...

QUESTIONS:

- **What was the last/best invitation you've received?**
- What do we discover about the power of invitation in this reading?
- According to research, fear is the main thing that prevents people from inviting others to church - Why could that be? Can you relate? Have you had any positive/negative experiences of inviting others?
- Why was what Jesus said to Nathanael so significant that he moved from skepticism to belief?
- How can we respond to skepticism about Who Jesus is?
- *Philip's invite to Nathanael is a great example for us - what lessons can we learn about inviting others to Jesus for themselves?*
- Philip knew he wasn't just inviting Nathanael to **some place** but to **Some One**, Jesus, Who sees, knows and loves us and others - *let's be inspired to reach out with this powerful invitation!*

NEXT STEPS:

- **'come and see'** - is there an event/service or even a coffee out you can invite others to that help them discover more about Jesus?
- can you organise something as a group to invite others to?

scan QR code to watch Jesus' and Nicodemus' conversation



SESSION 3 - GOT QUESTIONS (NICODEMUS)

READINGS: JOHN 3:1-21, JOHN 19:38-42, 2 COR 5:17-21

INTRODUCTION:

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin, a religious and academic expert in the law...but he had questions for Jesus! Jesus knew that his 'how to' questions were not really the questions he wanted answered...in John 3 we see the heart of the Good News of Jesus! It's ironic that this moment of private, under the cover of night, conversation contains the world's best known Bible verse - John 3:16.

QUESTIONS:

- If **you** were to ask Jesus a question what would it be?
- Have you had any conversations or questions about your faith recently?
- Why do you think Nicodemus talked to Jesus at night?
- Jesus spoke about being *'born again'* - what has been your personal experience of this?
- In this conversation, what do we learn about Nicodemus, Jesus and helping others who may come to us with questions about faith, life and God?
- *Nicodemus also appeared in John 19:38-42 - it's evident there was a journey of faith and leaning towards Jesus that those initial questions could have been the catalyst to...*
- *maybe others around us have questions that could be part of their journey to Christ!*
- Here's the 7 most-Google'd questions about God and the Christian faith - maybe chat over your responses:



1. Why does God allow suffering and evil?
2. Does life have a purpose?
3. Does God exist?
4. Is Christianity too narrow?
5. Is Jesus presented as God in the Bible?
6. Is the Bible reliable?
7. Can I know God personally?

NEXT STEPS:

- Are there any big questions you are dealing with right now that your group could help with?
- Have you been *'born again'*? consider Jesus' words in this reading and your response to Him, talk it over with your group leader or Pastor
- Check out www.gotquestions.org for biblically based answers to spiritual related questions.