

=THE CONVERSION=

Lesson 1

The Woman at the Well

Objects to have:

Something to hide

A newspaper

Chalk and chalkboard

A pitcher

A grocery sack with something in it

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

Everybody likes to play games. Let's play a game this morning. See this. (Hold up the object which you will hide.) I'm going to hide this. Everybody shut your eyes. (Hide the object.) Now open your eyes. Now everybody seek (be sure to use the word "seek") the object which I have hidden. Look for it! (If the group of children is too large for everyone to look for the object, have only two or three children shut their eyes, while the others watch where you hide the object. Have only these two or three look for it.) We have just played the game of Hide-and-Seek.

There's another kind of game that's fun to play. It's called a game of telling riddles. I have a riddle. What's black and white and read all over? (For younger children, you may have to repeat this riddle very slowly so that they get the picture of something that is just black and white, and then have them wonder about having it be "red" all over.) The answer to that riddle is, of course a newspaper. (Put out the newspaper for the sake of explanation. Show the children that it is black and white, but that it is read by people who can read.)

In our story for today we are going to hear about two people who were seeking something. One of these people told a riddle. You listen very carefully so that you will know what they were seeking. Also, listen very carefully for the riddle.

Telling the story:

(Draw on the chalkboard a simple map of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea. Indicate the region west of the northern tip of the Dead Sea.) Jesus was here one day. He came to this part of the country where some Jews lived. He decided that He wanted to get up here to this other part of the country where other Jews lived. (Indicate the whole area west of the Sea of Galilee.) Then how would you suggest that Jesus get from this area down here to this part of the country up here? It would seem that it would be easiest to go right straight up north, wouldn't it? There were Jews up here and Jews down here. (Indicate these areas on your chalkboard map.) In this part of the country, however (indicate the area of Samaria between Judæa and Galilee) lived some people whom the Jews did not like at all. These people did not like the Jews, either. The people who lived in this area were called Samaritans. What were they called? Yes, they were called Samaritans. Jews lived down here and Jews lived up here, and the Samaritans lived between them, right here. Now, whenever any Jew decided to travel from here to here as Jesus was deciding, he would not go through the country where the Samaritans lived. He would go this direction. (Indicate crossing the Jordan River, progressing north on the east side of the Jordan River to within a place a few miles south of the Sea of Galilee and recrossing the Jordan River.) A Jew would cross the Jordan River and would go up this way on this side of the Jordan River. He would once again cross the Jordan River to get to this part of the country where more Jews lived. He would never pass through the country of the Samaritans.

When Jesus came to earth, he came into a Jewish family. Anyone looking at Jesus would say that He was a Jew. Jesus decided, however, that He would go through the country of the Samaritans. Jesus had a job to do while He was here on earth. In order to do all that He should do, He had to go through the country of the Samaritans. The Bible tells us that the job Jesus had to do was to seek and to save that which was lost. It was as if Jesus was going out to play a game; He was looking for someone. Jesus with His disciples started going this way. (Indicate north on your "map.") When they had traveled for many, many hours, they finally got to this place (indicate the location of Jacob's Well which was not quite halfway between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee). It was almost lunchtime. It was getting to be about noontime. Jesus was tired. He sat down on a low stone wall that was built around a very deep hole in the ground. In the hole was water; this was a well where Jesus sat. It was called Jacob's Well. At certain times of the day the ladies would come from the town to get water from the well. The ladies' houses did not have sinks and faucets as our houses do. All of the water that was used for washing, for cooking, and for drinking was pulled up from this well. The ladies would come with their water pots or pitchers (hold up your pitcher, and demonstrate while saying the following:), and hook them up to the end of the chain that was wrapped around the pole at the top of the well. After hooking the pitcher to the chain, the lady would turn the crank so that the chain got longer and longer, letting the pitcher or the water pot down into the well. The water pot or pitcher would go "splash!" into the water. The lady would let the water flow into the water pot or the pitcher, then turn the crank the other way so that the chain would pull up the water pot or the pitcher. She would then lean over and unhook the water pot or the pitcher and carry it home.

While Jesus sat to rest, His disciples decided to go into the city to buy some food for lunch. While Jesus was sitting on the wall around the well, a lady came to the well. She had her water pot in her hands. Jesus said to the woman, "Please give Me a drink of water."

"You are a Jewish man. You being a Jew ask me, a Samaritan lady, to give You a drink of water? Jewish people don't have anything to do with Samaritans. I do not understand." The woman was very surprised that Jesus had asked her for a drink of water.

Jesus said to the lady, "If you had known Who I am, you would have asked for a drink of water from Me. The kind of water I have is living water." That sounds like a riddle to me, children. How can water be living? Jesus said, "Water that I would give you to drink is living water. Just ask Me for it. If you drink of the water that I give you, you will never be thirsty again. The water will give you everlasting life." That was a riddle. Let's see if the lady can guess the riddle.

The lady said, "Oh, Sir, please give me this water. I don't want to be thirsty again. If I have this water, I won't ever have to come to this well and draw up water from it again." The woman had not guessed Jesus' riddle. The woman and Jesus talked a little while longer.

Jesus said, "Woman, you have been a very wicked woman." Jesus knew all about what the woman had done. He told her that He knew she had been married five times and that now she was living with a man who was not even her husband. The woman was very astonished.

"How do you know all about me, Sir?" asked the woman. "I think that You must have a special gift from God." The woman was asking about God; she wanted to know about Him.

Jesus said to the woman, "I am God's Son. I have come from Heaven to earth." How excited the lady was at this news! She accepted Jesus as her Saviour; she believed in Him. The lady then decided that she should tell those whom she knew and loved the good news, that God's Son had come to earth from Heaven.

By this time Jesus' disciples had come back to the well. (Pick up your grocery sack.) They had with them some food to eat. They stood and listened for a while to Jesus and the woman talking together. When the woman left, Jesus did not reach out for some food. He acted as if He did not care to eat lunch. His disciples said, "Jesus, You should eat Your lunch. Here, we have some good things for You to eat. It is lunchtime. We are sure You are hungry. We are hungry."

Jesus said, “Sometimes there are more important things to do than to eat. I have to finish the work that I came to do. I came to tell people how they could go to Heaven. You should be telling other people how to get to Heaven. Look for lost people—look for people who do not know about Me and are therefore going to Hell when they die.”

While Jesus and His disciples were talking at the well, the woman went back to the city. She went around telling people about the Son of God being there by the well. She told her friends and members of her family, “Come on! You need to listen to Jesus. You need to know how to go to Heaven, too. Come, see Him and hear Him.” Because this woman went around telling so many about Jesus, crowds of people came with her to the well. Pretty soon, it was time for people to go home and go to bed, but they were not ready for Jesus to leave yet. They wanted to listen to Him for a while longer. The people of the city, the Samaritans, begged Jesus to stay longer in their country. Jesus stayed two more whole days. The Samaritans listened to Him. There were many Samaritans who were saved! That woman had been seeking the lost, and she had brought them to Jesus. The woman had been doing what Jesus wanted her to do.

We know about Jesus. We know that He died on the cross. We know that if we just ask Him to be our Saviour, we can go to Heaven, too. We should go seeking other people who do not know Him.

What about the riddle that Jesus told the lady? The answer is this: The “water” that Jesus gives is everlasting life; it’s not water that we drink. If anybody asks Jesus to be his Saviour, then he’ll never worry about what will happen to him when he dies.

There’s a verse in the Bible that we should learn today. This verse tells us why Jesus came from Heaven to earth. The verse is found in the book of the Bible that is called Luke. It is found in Luke, chapter 19 and verse 10. (Show the children this verse in your Bible.) “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Teach this verse to the children.)

Jesus went looking for the lost, and He found a lady who needed to be saved. She got saved, and then she went seeking the lost, and they found Jesus, too. Isn’t that wonderful?