

Unit 1: BFFs

Faith Focus: Jesus is our friend.

Friends love all the time. (Proverbs 17:17)

SESSION 4

GROW IN FAITH

Friends Listen—John 4:4-42

Today's Bible story is one that boldly proclaims the fullness of God's love. In the story, Jesus stops to rest during the hottest part of the day and asks for a drink. This seems like a relatively simple request, but it is made to a Samaritan woman. According to the social rules of biblical times, Jesus should not have spoken to her. Jesus was a man and a Jewish teacher, which, among other things, would have been two distinct enough reasons to avoid this interaction. By choosing to speak to a Samaritan woman, Jesus challenges societal expectations.

Jesus not only asks the Samaritan woman for a drink but also has a conversation with her. After talking and listening, Jesus takes this interaction a step further and offers her "living water." Jesus extends inclusive hospitality to the Samaritan woman and names her as worthy of God's grace and love. By this example, Jesus reminds us that he is a caring and compassionate friend to everyone, and we should be the same. This "living water" will never run out and should be extended to all.

- Explore the concept of living water.
- Practice active listening.

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend
Woman at the Well Storyboard
(Sequencing/Storytelling)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

FUN WITH FAITH

Listening Phone (Craft)

Listening Journal (Journaling)

When I Go to the Well (Game)

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

SUPPLIES

scissors

CEB kids' Bible or CEB
storybook Bible

TV and DVD player or
streaming device

sticky notes

crayons

paper cups

string

paper clips

pushpin

pencils

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

Prepare Ahead: Set up your area with the supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15), Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23), and Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Spring Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the water jug sticker on the Session 4 space.

SAY: In today's story, we will learn about a woman who met Jesus at a well. In Jesus' day, people had to collect water at a well. Most people went early in the morning or late at night to avoid the sun. This woman might have been at the well in the heat of the day because she wanted to be alone. She needed a friend to listen to her. Let's find out what Jesus does.

Faith Focus—Jesus Is Our Friend

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 1 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 23).

- Show children the Faith Focus Poster.

SAY: Our faith focus for today is "Jesus is our friend."

ASK: Have you ever felt lonely?

- Give children time and space to share their ideas.

Woman at the Well Storyboard

Supplies: Activity Sheets, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Tear out "Woman at the Well Storyboard" (Session 4 Activity Sheet) for each child.

- Give every child an activity sheet.

SAY: Today we will read from John 4:4-42. Let's take a minute to guess what order these pictures should be in and what is happening in the story. Later, we will put the story in the correct order.

- Have the children cut out the story images and talk together about what might be happening in each panel. Have the children guess the order of the panels and stack the story in sequential order with the first thing on top and the last thing on the bottom. Set these aside for later.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: *CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook, story order cards from "Woman at the Well Storyboard"*

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the story of the woman at the well (John 4:4-42) from a CEB kids' Bible or your favorite CEB Bible storybook.
- Have the children look at the order of their story order cards and compare their versions to the versions they heard from the Bible.
- Take time to discuss what happened compared to what each child thought would happen based on the story cards.

ASK: How do you think the woman felt at the beginning of the story when Jesus first approached her? How did she feel at the end of the story when she told people about meeting Jesus?

Big Faith Video

Supplies: *Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device*

- Watch the Session 4 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Give children time to respond to the questions on the screen. Discuss the questions as partner pairs, as small groups, or all together.

ASK: What was your favorite part of the video?

Faith Response

Supplies: *All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, crayons*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Unit 1 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 11 & 14) and Unit 1 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 15) if you haven't already.*

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you: "Friends love all the time" (Proverbs 17:17).

SAY: Jesus invited the woman at the well to be his friend. She was another surprising friend for Jesus. Many people thought Jesus should only be friends with the priests and people who followed the rules. But Jesus invites everyone to be his friend. Jesus listens to us and knows what we need.

ASK: When have you been glad someone listened to you?

SAY: Jesus listened to the woman at the well. His kindness and willingness to hear what she had to say changed her life.

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Give each child a sticky note and crayons.

ASK: What do you see on our poster?

- Invite each child to write one word to describe how he or she feels when someone listens to him or her. Let the children place their notes on the poster.

FUN WITH FAITH

Listening Phone

Supplies: paper cups, string, paper clips, pushpin, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Each child will need one cup. Use a pushpin to poke a hole in the bottom of every cup. Cut string into three-foot-long pieces.

SAY: Jesus listened well to the woman at the well. Let's practice using our own listening skills.

- Give every child a cup with a hole in the bottom.
- Have the children pair up. Give each pair a piece of string and two paper clips.
- Have the children thread one end of the string through each cup. Put a paper clip on the string inside the cup to keep the string in place.
- Have one child hold a cup up to her or his ear and have the other child whisper the memory verse into the other cup. They should keep the string tight between them. Then the children should switch roles.

SAY: When we listen carefully, we show that we care about people. It's important to use our full attention to listen to what others are telling us.

Listening Journal

Supplies: pencils

Prepare Ahead: Make copies of the reproducible “Listening Journal” (Leader Guide—p. 34).

- Give each child a copy of “Listening Journal.”

SAY: Writing is a good way to organize our thoughts and reflect on our experiences. Let’s take some time to listen to ourselves and reflect on what makes us feel like someone is listening well.

- Have the children follow the directions on the “Listening Journal” reproducible.

When I Go to the Well

SAY: Jesus made the woman at the well feel heard and cared for. When we listen to our friends we do the same thing.

- Have the children sit in a circle.
- Have a child start the game by saying, “When I go to the well I bring” and have the child choose one thing to bring. The group will then say, “When we go to the well we bring [child A’s object].” The next child will then add whatever she or he chooses to bring. Now the group will say, “When we go to the well, we will bring [child A’s object] and [child B’s object].” Then the next child adds to the list and the group names all three objects. Continue until every child has added something.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Spring Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21). Photocopy the Unit 1 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 91–92) as needed.

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

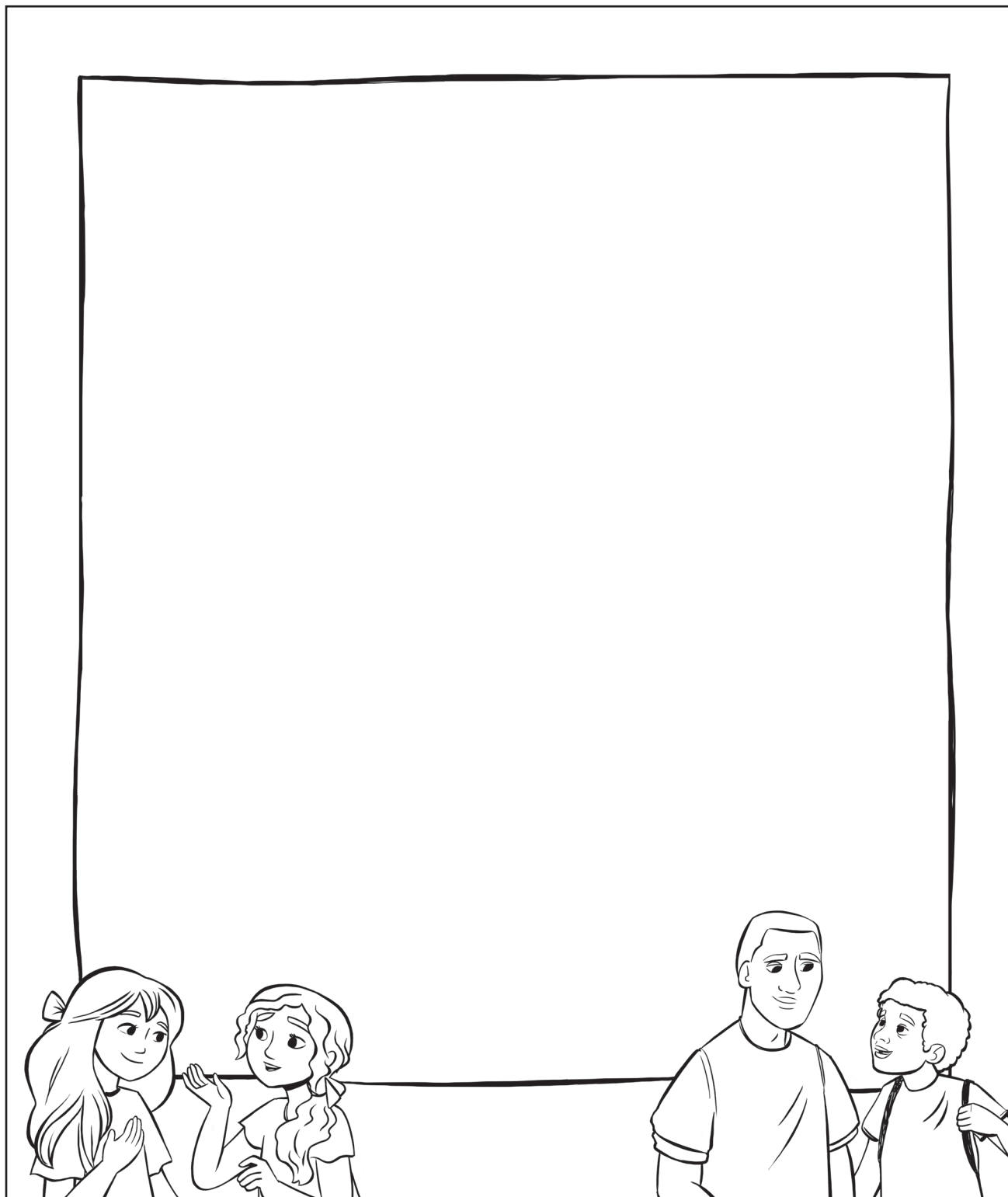
SAY: Jesus shows us how to be a good friend. Jesus wants us to listen well to others to show that we love everyone.

- Have the children gather in a circle.
- One at a time, invite each child to share one person he or she wants to listen to carefully this week.

PRAY: Thank you for teaching us to listen. Help us to listen carefully. Help us to feel heard. Help us to make others feel heard. Amen.

- Send the Family Faith Letter home with each child who hasn’t received one yet.
- Send home any activities or items made during today’s session.

Who listens well to you? Write about your experience below.



Art: Tatevik Avakyan/Illustration Online LLC