



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

Materials:
Whiteboard, markers
Blindfold
Chocolate
Gospel of John DVD
Three Amigos DVD
DVD & CD players

Ziplocks with
crackers
Water bottles
Backpack, books
Hand mirror
"Beautiful" CD

WORKSHOP:

THE "WELL"-FOCUSED LEADER:

Leadership Lessons from the Woman at the Well

by Kami Minor

LEADER'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: Many try to be a leader on their own power, but we can learn from the Woman at the Well that ANYONE can be a leader, and lead in unexpected ways when they are refreshed with the "living water" Jesus offers.

CONTEXT: This training is for all who desire to be a leader- even those who don't think they are the "leader type." It can be shared with the PWOC body, at Board Meetings, Leadership Training, or may be shortened for use as a devotional.

TIME: 75 Minutes

HOOK YOUR AUDIENCE: (10 minutes)

Ask: **Have you ever been lost? Trying to find your way somewhere when you realize that you are going the wrong way? There you were going your way, thinking all was well when you suddenly realized you were way off course...perhaps even in a place you were afraid to be? Did you feel that moment of panic when you realized you were on the wrong path?**

Let's try something. I need a volunteer to wear a blindfold and be "lost." Choose volunteer, place blindfold on them. Being lost and trying to find your way is like wearing a blindfold and trying to get to the chocolate I have placed somewhere in this room. No one speak...and let's see if our lost person can find the chocolate...allow the "lost" person to struggle for a moment, trying to find the chocolate. Then ask the "lost" person how it feels to try to find the chocolate. (frustrating, impossible, didn't even tell me where I was going...)



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Ask: **Would it help if you had a leader to describe where the chocolate is and guide you there? (Of course) Take the Blindfold off. That's what we are going to talk about today. Those around you are looking for a leader to guide them to the "sweet" things God has for them (like this chocolate!). But we have to be ready to lead them. If we are lost and wearing blindfolds ourselves, what help can we be?**

And what kind of leader would I be to get you all hungry for chocolate and not offer you some? (*share the chocolate ☺*)

PLAY DVD OF BIBLE: **While you are enjoying some chocolate, I will play the Gospel of John, chapter 4: The Woman at the Well. This is a word-for-word interpretation of the Bible with nothing added. Watch for leadership qualities in the woman throughout the encounter with Jesus.**

Note to Trainer: Using movie clips can be a powerful way to illustrate your point. Your participants are likely to remember the scene you show them for a long time. Select your material carefully and prayerfully.

MAKE YOUR POINT 1: (10 minutes)

A LEADER IS *FRESH* FROM DRINKING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

When the Woman comes to the well, would you classify her as a leader? Probably not. She is actually avoiding everyone. She has sinned and is an outcast— not exactly the "leader type!"

It is safe to say that no one was looking at her as a leader. Perhaps some mothers were even saying to their daughters, "Don't be like her. We see a failure and an outcast." She was what some of the young people would call an "epic fail." Have you ever felt that way? Like you have messed up pretty much everything and there is no hope? I think we all have.

But what does Jesus see? *Allow participants to give a response- (someone with potential, a future leader for Him...)*

And remember, she is from Samaria and a woman—it is counter-cultural for Jesus to even speak to her, much less accept a drink (*see verse 9*).

In probably one of the least likely candidates in town, Jesus saw something wonderful. He looked past her obvious flaws and looked into her heart. He saw someone he could use in a mighty way. She was even found worthy of placing her story in Scripture for us to read and learn from thousands of



years later! That doesn't sound like much of a failure to me! Makes me wonder...Do we search out our future leaders with society's eyes or as Jesus did?

Does Jesus leave the woman in her pitiful state—a fearful outcast, avoiding everyone at the well in the heat of the day? (NO) What happens to change this "outcast" into a leader with courage and confidence? Allow some responses here. (Answers may include: Jesus offers her "living water," he gives her the truth—showing her the sin in her life, he is there to save her from her suffering, her sins are now gone, her burden lifted...)

In other words, she is refreshed. Being "Fresh" is the first leadership lesson we learn from the Woman at the Well. Write "Fresh" on the board or chart.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 1: (10 minutes)

Let's look more closely at what this "refreshing" might have felt like for the woman at the well. She came to the well thirsty, so we are going to get thirsty ourselves. Give each person a Ziploc bag with 4-6 saltine crackers. Have them eat the crackers. No one is allowed to drink anything during this exercise! While they are eating, talk about things that make you thirsty- like summer heat activities, riding a bike or running a marathon, walking across the desert with no water...Then play the movie clip from The Three Amigos where they are riding across the desert and they are thirsty. (SCENE 14-hilarious!)

After the clip ask: Are you thirsty? (YES!) Would some water refresh you right now? (YES!) Now we know a little of what the woman was experiencing. On top of her physical thirst, add the burdens she was carrying of being an outcast and feeling like there was no hope for her.

So imagine a heavy pack on your back that you can't take off. Bring out a heavy pack-take out items, show them and repack. The backpack should include some heavy items, such as books, labeled with words like: *pain, regret, shame, guilt,* and so on. After the backpack is repacked, put it on (or choose a volunteer to put it on). **What if you got up every morning and felt this way? Would you want to lead anyone? NO. You would want to hide just like the Woman at the Well did! Now give an index card to each participant to write their burden. They may add their word to the backpack if they wish (make it optional).**

It's great to use visuals like this. Consider involving your learners in the illustration-several could help pack the backpack or take turns wearing it. Even just a few seconds out of their seats and participating in the activity can make a huge difference in their attention span as well as their investment in the workshop.



But one day, everything changed...the Woman met Jesus; he offered her some living water and took away all her burdens! *Take off the backpack.* Jesus wants to take your burdens, too! But even more, he wants to refresh you! *Give each participant a bottle of water with living water label.* Let's take a drink just like she did...let this bottled water symbolize a drink of *living water*. Do you feel a little better? Have some more...it gets even better! The Woman felt so much better, she stepped out and faced the very people she was avoiding to tell them about Jesus! I call that a bold leader!

So, when the Woman got FRESH or "refreshed," she was ready to lead. We need to be sure to stay refreshed every day with a trip to the well of "Living Water" so we can be bold and courageous leaders, too!

MAKE YOUR POINT 2: (10 minutes)

A LEADER MUST BE *FEARLESS* OF WHAT OTHERS THINK

Speaking of courage.... We learn something else from the Woman at the well.... To be Fearless. *Write "Fearless" on the board.* Think back to this morning when you first got up. *Pick up the hand mirror.* When you looked in the mirror... what do you say? I know what I say sometimes...and it isn't always "Good Morning Beautiful!" In fact, truth be told, it rarely is. If you are anything like me, what you really see in the mirror are all the things that are wrong with you, the sleep in your eyes, a new wrinkle or grey hair, the blemish that you didn't have yesterday...all the reasons you don't measure up. Can I get an amen? (AMEN!) Why is it our mirror only seems to reflect the negative things?

I think it is because we are all thinking about what everyone else is going to see when we emerge into the world. Why else would we care? After all, we don't have to look at ourselves! So that begs the question: why do we care so much what they see? Why do we save our cutest outfit for PWOC mornings? Why does our hair need that extra bounce? So what if our shoes are last season? I think somewhere down deep we want others to think well of us. We want them to like us... and it isn't just our appearance, is it? It is everything about us. We really care about how other people see us.

The Woman at the Well was no exception. She wasn't there at the well in the heat of the day because it was the best time. She was avoiding everyone else who came in the morning or evening when it was cooler. The well was a social place, not unlike a PWOC meeting. She didn't want to be there while everyone was gathering and talking and having fun, only to be reminded that



she was not wanted or accepted- only to get one of "those" looks from the ladies, telling her she would never measure up.

No wonder she felt like she needed to hide, even if it meant going to the well at an inconvenient time, suffering through the noonday heat. Better that than the heat of one of "those" looks.

But as we look at her story, she doesn't stay hidden at the well. Something amazing happens. Something gives her the courage and the drive to go where the other ladies are and actually start talking to them. Look at how miraculous this is! The very ones she has avoided for years, she has suddenly felt the courage to speak to! It's like rolling out of bed and going to PWOC in your pajamas without any makeup on! She didn't care anymore- at all- what they thought of her! What brought about this miraculous change? The Messiah has given her worth.

Let's look at the text in John 4:27-30, 39-42. What "fearless" qualities do you see in the Woman? *Have a volunteer read the text. Allow responses from the group.*

What has brought on this change? In a word...love. The Messiah has given her worth. He has shown her that He loves her...even with her past. She no longer needs to get her value from those around her. She has been crowned a princess- the daughter of a King. She didn't need anything or anyone else to make her feel worthy.

So, our second lesson from the well is to be Fearless. A Leader is Fearless of what others say about her. She only strives to please her King.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 2: (10 minutes)

We cannot be "fearless" if we are always ducking around corners and trying to hide from others so they will not really see us. If we are afraid of what they think of us, we will not stand up for what we believe in. Instead we will compromise-and "suffer in the heat" like the Woman at the Well, just to avoid conflict.

Pick up the hand mirror. So I think we need a new mirror; a mirror that shows us how God sees us. The Woman at the Well got a new look at herself when Jesus accepted her unconditionally. We all have that same acceptance here today...but do we really believe it...do we really live like it? Do we really understand how much we are cherished by our Heavenly Father?



Let's do a project to find out. Take a look at your mirror handout. At the bottom it asks you to list at least 5 things about yourself that you give God the glory for. Before you say that is a lot, I'll bet each of us would have very little trouble naming 5 things about ourselves we are not pleased with, and then some. This is NOT bragging...it is taking note of God's blessings. The list need not have anything to do with appearance; you might praise God for your singing ability or your cooking talent. If you want, you can even use initials or a code so no one else will know what you wrote. While you write, I am going to play a song by Mercy Me called "Beautiful." I hope you like the words. They remind us how much we are treasured by God. *Lyrics are attached.*

Music can touch the soul in a unique way. This activity and song provide a sweet time for your participants to reflect and to commune with God. Once the song ends, be careful to build on this reflective time rather than cutting it off abruptly. One way to transition out of time may be to ask if anyone would like to share their thoughts. You may also want to take a few minutes to pray together to "seal" this time.

I hope that you discovered at least one NEW thing about yourself to give God the glory for! Next time you hear those messages in your head that make you want to hide, and put you at the well in the heat of the day, take a look in this mirror-God's mirror-and leave those other empty messages behind-just like the empty jar the Woman left at the well.

Well, we have seen that leaders are fresh and fearless...there is one more lesson left...

MAKE YOUR POINT 3: (10 minutes)

A LEADER MUST BE A *FRIEND* TO ALL

The woman was now forever changed. She had encountered the Messiah. Her burdens were gone, and she was refreshed with *living* water. I wonder if she knew when she took her jar and headed for the well that day what an adventure awaited her!

And yet there would still be one more remarkable change in her that day. One that shows she is becoming a true leader.

We just completed the activity with God's mirror, celebrating God's creativity among us. Each of us wrote a very different list of things that God has blessed us with. These differences are like the various colors and shades in a



great painting; they make our life rich and interesting. But sometimes two of the colors, while each beautiful in their own right, do not work well next to each other. They do not blend well; they clash and try to cancel each other out.

We have all had this happen in our lives. In school there was probably someone who you found hard to get along with. You probably have stories! In the world of work, there is usually at least one worker in any office that you wish you could move to a different location. Any time we gather a group of people, all with different gifting and personalities, there will be an opportunity for conflict. By a show of hands, how many of you have encountered conflict in your life? *(Undoubtedly a unanimous response).*

We all have conflict, and the Woman at the Well is no exception. She clearly does not get along with her peers. In fact, she appears to be completely friendless- at least until Jesus enters the picture.

What a difference a Friend makes! He offers the Woman what any true friend would: a listening ear, compassion, the truth... but then he offers something more... living water. The change is immediate. The woman's eyes are opened to a whole new way of life. She is completely changed.

We know she is changed because she does what was unthinkable only moments before— she literally runs to the town to tell everyone what (Who) she had found. Could this be the Messiah? Her excitement bubbled over just like the bubbling spring Jesus describes to her when they were talking at the well.

What can her story teach us? What happens to her life because Jesus is her friend? *Allow responses. If needed, use these questions to help move the discussion along: What would have happened if she had decided only to tell the people she got along with about her change? (Nothing or very little) Would that have mattered? (Yes, an entire town would have missed out on meeting Jesus. If she had not been willing to be a friend to everyone, just as Jesus had been a friend to her, the results would have been very different).*

Final thought: I wonder if we ever miss out on miraculous transformations like this one because we choose not to work with someone we don't get along with. We decide to work only with our friends. The Woman at the Well shows us a leader is a friend to all. *Write "Friend" on the board.*



ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS 3: (10 minutes)

When we think of being a friend in this way, it is a little tougher than just "hanging out with the girls" that we usually think of. This means working with people who might be tough to love, who might even have been mean to us, who we might not even think of as the "friend" type. The woman at the well went to talk to the very ones who shunned her, talked about her behind her back, and treated her badly. Jesus himself began the entire encounter by sharing with an outcast woman-from Samaria...a shocking thing to do in that culture.

And we are called to love others as Jesus has loved us. ALL others.

So who do you know that is thirsty? Who needs someone to care? Who could you offer a bottle of living water? A friend wouldn't let them go thirsty. Lead them to the well! There may be a radical transformation in store!

I am going to give each of you another bottle of the "living water." This bottle is not for you, it is for whoever God is bringing to your mind right now. I believe that God is calling you to be a leader in that person's life.

If you are comfortable, take a minute to share that person's name with someone sitting near you. You may wish to tell them a little bit about the circumstance. Remember to be respectful of that person.

We are going to pray right now for those people and for you- that you will be Fresh, Fearless, and Friendly as God leads you to work in their lives. Let's pray.

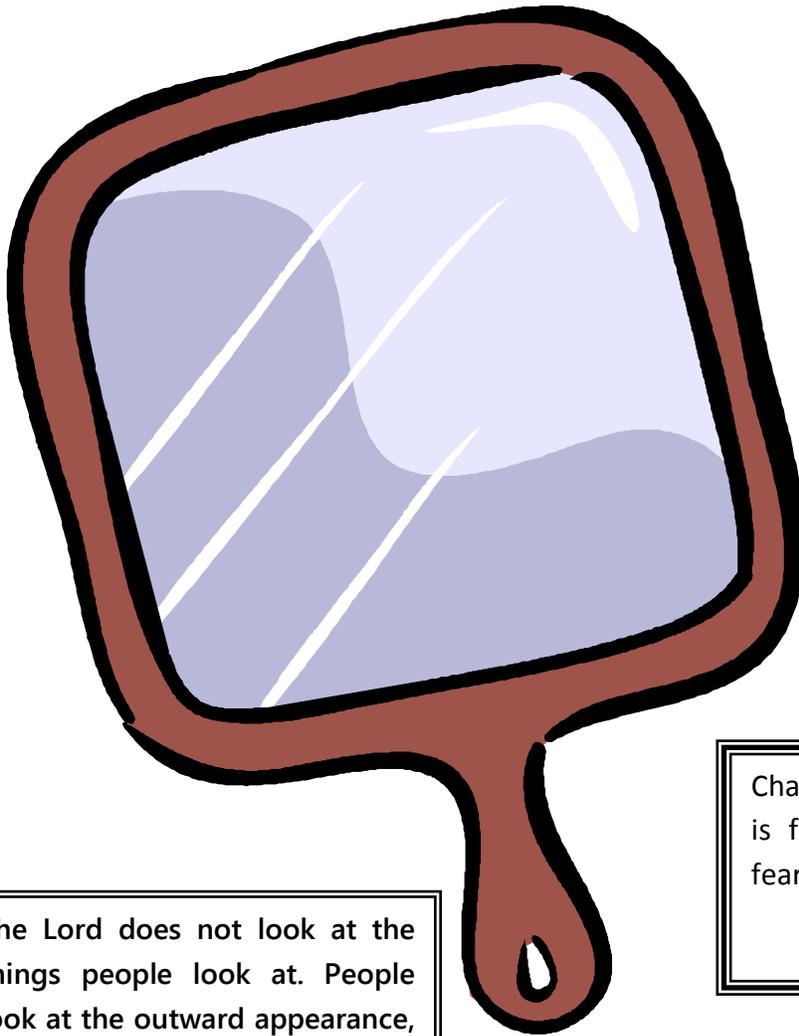
APPLY IT TO LIFE: (5 minutes)

A bit of encouragement as you go. Remember that the people who were touched by the Woman at the Well were first interested in Jesus because of what she told them, but were finally converted because they experienced the Messiah for themselves. To play off an old saying, "You can lead the people to the well, but you cannot make them drink." The Holy Spirit is in charge of that.

Just make sure you are drinking from the well regularly to be *refreshed*, looking in the right mirrors so you are *fearless* of what others might think, and looking to include as many *friends* as you can. Now that is a "well" focused leader.



MIRROR, MIRROR...



Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

1 Peter 3:3-4

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Proverbs 31:30

The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7

Write at least 5 things about yourself that you give God the glory for...

1. .
2. .
3. .
4. .
5. .



"Beautiful" by Mercy Me

The days will come when you don't have the strength
When all you hear is "you're not worth anything"
Wondering if you ever could be loved
And if they truly saw your heart they'd see too much

You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are made for so much more than all of this
You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are treasured, you are sacred, you are His
You're beautiful

And praying that you have the heart to find
'Cause you are more than what is hurting you tonight
For all the lies you've held inside so long
And they are nothing in the shadow of the Cross

You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are made for so much more than all of this
You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are treasured, you are sacred, you are His
You're beautiful

Before you ever took a breath
Long before the world began
Of all the wonders He possessed
There was one more precious
Of all the earth and skies above
You're the one He madly loves
Enough to die

You're beautiful
You're beautiful in His eyes

You're beautiful
You were meant for so much more than all of this
You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are treasured, you are sacred, you are His
You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You're meant for so much more than all of this
You're beautiful, You're beautiful
You are treasured, you are sacred, you are His

