



# TRANSIT

WEEK 6 GROUP GUIDE | MESSAGE BY CHAD BRUEGMAN

## START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

**You get to pick three people living or dead to have a dinner with and ask questions, who would you pick and why?**

## SHARE

Welcome to “Transit.”

*We all want to go somewhere. To get there, we have to make a purposeful decision to begin the journey. When we travel, we take different vehicles – cars, planes, subway systems, buses, bikes, etc. Each of the vehicles serves a distinct purpose in moving us closer to where we want to go. As we purposefully take a journey together through “Transit,” the hope is that we can discover how we can grow closer to God through prayer, studying God’s word, relationships, serving, giving, and sharing our story about what Jesus Christ has done in our lives. As we talk about and experience these spiritual disciplines, we hope you realize that the power is not in the vehicles themselves, but in the subject of our affection, which is Jesus Christ. We can’t do anything to earn God’s love or salvation, but there are real ways we can cultivate a thriving relationship with God.*

What comes to mind when you think about your own personal story? Is it a story about doubt, fears, insecurity or shame? Maybe it is a story full of trials, unexpected victories and praises? All of us have a story. If we have given our lives to Christ, we have a testimony that no one else has. Each one of us, who have asked Jesus Christ to be the leader and forgiver of our lives, has a story to tell which is as unique as a snowflake. God found us stuck in our sin and the Holy Spirit began to draw us towards Christ, for some it started with a conversation in a bar, restaurant or that person at work who talked about their faith in God. Others of us found ourselves in desperate need because of a devastating trial. For others, we heard about Jesus as a kid or were raised in a Christian family, but not until later did God begin to water that seed. All of us have a story of how God saved, changed and redeemed our lives.

No one can tell your story better than you.

**Let's read John 4:1-26** (Maybe have a few people read)

The New American Commentary gives us insight into how scandalous this conversation would have been in this time:

While Jesus was resting at the well, a Samaritan woman came to draw water. The arrival of the woman set up a crisis for traditional Jewish custom of the day. Not only did the Jews avoid contact with the Samaritans but Jewish men avoided speaking with women in public—even their own wives! Jewish rabbis wanted women to stay “in their place.” Men certainly did not want to discuss theological issues with them. They also did not think that the 'am hā'āreš (“the people of the land” who worked with their hands such as fishermen and carpenters) had any ability to speak about the fine points of religion, particularly about details of God's saving work (cf. the view of the Sanhedrin in Acts 4:13). This perspective would be even more emphatic when dealing with a woman, particularly the wife of a common laborer who was viewed as very low on the Jewish social scale. We can imagine what the rabbinic view would be of a “questionable,” half-breed Samaritan woman!

But Jesus was different. He spoke to her as God spoke to Hagar and as Abraham's servant spoke to Rebekah in ancient times. This woman was really being treated like a person. Jesus even wanted a drink from her (John 4:7). What would the disciples have said if they had been around? Fortunately they were conveniently out of the way looking for kosher food in Samaria (4:8)! The woman did not know what to make of such an overture. Jesus did not fit the stereotype of kosher-concerned Jewish men. Her first response, therefore, was to question him about his unexpected freedom in conversation (4:9).

**This woman was not expecting to be treated well. In our current culture, what types of people can you think of that might not be treated well by judgmental religious people? Why do think those people are mistreated?**

**Are we guilty of mistreating people that God loves?**

**How do you think the church can begin to do a better job at loving people?**

## **GROW**

If you have attended weekend services at Red Rocks Church, it would not be surprising to have heard the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. It is a compelling true story of how Jesus showed us what God's love is. Sometimes it is easy to read it and think about how we might reach out to someone like a Samaritan woman, but let's take it a step further. We tend to forget that it was God who made the first move towards us when we felt unapproachable, shameful and tangled up in all sorts of sin. We can relate to the Samaritan woman, because all of us at one point felt the same way living in our sin, and yet Jesus walked up, sat down next to us and just spoke to us in love. It is not only a reminder of God's ferocious love for each of us, but his ferocious love for every single person that is considered to be on the fringe of society. The truth is that you will never look into the eyes of a person that God does not love. Every person has a soul and a story, maybe a story that God will use powerfully one day.

Let's continue with the story and read John 4:27-42.

What was the food that Jesus was talking about and why was this food so important?

Why did so many of the Samaritans in the town believe? Did this woman have any biblical training? What made such an impact in the town?

The woman's story led them to hear for themselves the words of Jesus. How should this encourage us to share our own stories?

## **MOVE**

This week, throughout the message Chad talked about the importance of building relationships with people. Without a relationship, how can we bring light, love and life to people who need it? There are certain people that we might write-off, when God is putting a huge opportunity to show love, right in front of us. The problem that occurs is that some Christians feel that if they get to know someone who is willfully sinning against God, it might look like they are condoning the sin.

When we love people in the mess, it will always look like we are condoning sin to the Pharisees...but through the eyes of the person we are showing love to...it will look a lot like Jesus to them. We must see it through God's eyes and not man's eyes. This is precisely why Jesus saw a huge opportunity to love someone, when the rest of the group didn't recognize it when it was right in front of them. A pastor, Matt Chandler talked about loving fringe people, "You can't catch sin from sinners." Your proximity to lost people doesn't make sin contagious, so we can boldly build relationships with people.

Let's finish with reading 1 Peter 3:15-16

How do you need to get more 'prepared to give an answer'?

When we share our story with others, why is it important to do it with gentleness and respect? What are ways that Christians can carelessly respond to people when talking to them about God?

Think about those you pass by on a daily basis that might be difficult to love, is there someone who comes to mind that God might have you begin building a relationship with that you might not naturally desire?

## **PRAY**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

## TO GO.

Know that God will strengthen you to love those you might believe are difficult to love.

### **Psalm 18:32-34**

*The God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. He trains my hand for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.*

### **Additional Resources:**

- *Love Does*, a great book about loving people by Bob Goff.
- *Crazy Love* by Francis Chan