

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



CLEAN WATER AND GENDER JUSTICE

John 4:4-42 Jesus and a Samaritan Woman

Today we continue our series on global justice and will learn more about how The Salvation Army is taking action. We will be thinking about two areas of The Salvation Army's international development work: clean water and gender justice.

These two areas are linked because the burden of finding and collecting water often falls on the shoulders of women and girls. This can mean they miss out on the opportunity of education and are unable to spend their time on other activities.

11 October is the International Day of the Girl Child. This is a chance to celebrate girls' achievements and raise awareness about the challenges they face in accessing equal rights and opportunities. Visit <https://www.un.org/en/observances/girl-child-day> to find out more about this year's observance day and how you can take part.

Each child will need:

- A glass or cup, pens/pencils and cut-out images of drops of water https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_VE0hDSsbo_qCu6VJRuMVJuDF2F7AdGO/view – or children could draw or cut their own
- A water diary https://www.nwg.co.uk/globalassets/corporate-images/about/water003-resource-2_nw_lr_v3.pdf – see Action It section

You will need:

- Water sports quiz slides <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/116v3M6DljKZqgwaal11FJPsjq8v58COZsWT4CgCxY0A/edit?usp=sharing>
- Prepare Martha's story on a slide – see Pray It section
- Music (optional) – see Pray It section

Start It

Play a quiz on water sports. Can anyone name these eight water sports? <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/116v3M6DljKZqgwaal11FJPsjq8v58COZsWT4CgCxY0A>

- 🗣 **Say:** This quiz showed us the fun we can have with water, and the amazing talent people need to navigate it!
- 🗣 **Say:** Water is incredible. It can refresh us when we are exhausted, make dirty things clean, help seeds to grow, transform landscapes and be harnessed to create energy. Water is central to our lives – we literally can't live without it.

Tell It

- 🗣 **Say:** It shouldn't be too surprising, then, that water is an important theme that 'flows' throughout the Bible. Water is mentioned more than 700 times, from the first chapter (Genesis 1:2) to the last (Revelation 22:17).
- 🗣 **Say:** It is also there at key moments in Jesus' life.
- Before beginning his ministry as an adult Jesus was baptised in water.

- ➔ His first recorded miracle was the transformation of water into wine.
- ➔ He walked on water.
- ➔ He calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee.
- ➔ In preparing to say his final words before his death, he declared that he was thirsty.
- ➔ He spoke twice of 'living water' that could transform people's lives.

Read John 4:4-42 (ICB) and/or watch the following video.

Video

The woman at the well by LifeKids (2 mins 30 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vf3rqnoG5c>

Discuss

- ➔ I wonder why Jesus walked through Samaria.
- ➔ I wonder why the unnamed woman was at the well at midday, on her own.
- ➔ I wonder why Jesus did not go into the town with the disciples.
- ➔ I wonder why the villagers listened to the woman and came to Jesus.
- 💬 **Say:** When Jesus met the Samaritan woman, he offered her living water, water that transforms the life and soul of the person receiving it. This is certainly what happened for the woman at the well.
- 💬 **Say:** This Samaritan woman was not well respected or liked in the village. People didn't like the way she lived. Jesus challenged her about some of the choices she had made, but he didn't dwell on her past – he wanted to transform her future.
- 💬 **Say:** The woman received the water of life from Jesus and then went on to tell other people about her encounter with him. She had been transformed! She felt so wonderful that she didn't want to keep it to herself.
- 💬 **Say:** Soon everyone in her town knew about Jesus and got the opportunity to experience the transformation that living water could bring.

Sing It

Sing and dance along to this song about living water.

'Deep cries out' by Bethel Music Kids (4 mins 52 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HK3gTmYc4f0>

Pray It

- 💬 **Say:** Water leads to transformation. This is true of the water of life that we can experience through knowing Jesus, but it's also true of physical water.
- 💬 **Say:** Sadly, millions of people do not have access to clean water. What should be a life-giving resource is inaccessible or unsafe.
- 💬 **Say:** The Salvation Army in Malawi runs a project in rural communities to address the challenges that keep people in poverty and children out of education, such as a lack of safe drinking water.
- 💬 **Say:** Before the project, access to water was a big challenge. Children were spending a long time travelling to collect water before and after school. Sometimes they would be late to school or not make it to school at all. Often children would be so tired when they did reach school that it affected their concentration in class.
- 💬 **Say:** Martha is 13 years old and lives in Karonga District in Malawi, Africa.

Screen share her story. You may wish to ask a child to read it out.

Martha's story



'My dream is to become a nurse, to take care of fellow Malawians and develop my village and the whole of Malawi.'

'I struggled for many years to access education due to scarcity of water. I had to walk a long way to collect water every day. This was a very dangerous task. I remember getting up at 3 am one day to collect water from the lake with my older sister. On our way to the lake, we met a man who tried to hurt us. We were so fortunate that a farmer appeared and chased the man away. I don't want to think about could have happened if the farmer had not appeared.'

'Recently The Salvation Army drilled a borehole in our community to create a well. As it is close to my home, I no longer have to get up early to collect water. I can study before my house chores and attend school every day. My performance at school has dramatically improved!'

💡 **Say:** The areas of clean water and gender justice are closely linked because the job of collecting water in many societies is often left to women and girls. This means their opportunities for education and work are limited compared to men and boys. Also, as we heard in Martha's story, girls are vulnerable when they must collect water in the early hours and travel far from home.

💡 **Say:** Let's pray together.

Prayer droplets

Using the water drops print-out or hand-drawn drops, ask the children to write a prayer on each water drop. These could include:

- ➔ personal prayers – that they will know Jesus and experience the water of life that he offers
- ➔ prayers for gender justice – that there will be no more barriers to education and opportunities for women and girls, or
- ➔ prayers for water equality – that all people will have access to safe, clean water.

Once they have written as many 'prayer droplets' as they would like and cut them out, invite the children to drop them one at a time into an empty glass or cup, praying each prayer as they do.

You may like to play some music as they do this activity.

Action It

Challenge the children to keep a water-use diary to see how much water they use in a week. The 'Your Water Use' diary from Northumbrian Water Group Limited (www.nwg.co.uk) also includes helpful ideas for how you can save water.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to share with your group, for them to do at home.

FOR ME



Hear

Listen to the Develop Podcast episode 'What is a Sand Dam?' to hear about how The Salvation Army is working with communities to access clean water by constructing sand dams. Sand dams can provide year-round safe water, and when they are managed well they can last up to 100 years! Listen to the podcast on:

- ➔ Spotify – <https://open.spotify.com/episode/3fjgJj93HkVMXXrFWdX61C>
- ➔ Apple Podcasts – <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/what-is-a-sand-dam/id1498228777?i=1000523604453>
- ➔ or YouTube – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IVt3tdnjh0>

TOGETHER



Share

Take part in *Spend a Penny, Give a Pound*. <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/international-development/areas-work/clean-water>

Clean water and sanitation (that's everything related to using the loo in a healthy and hygienic way) are closely related.

Two billion people do not have access to adequate sanitation. Without a safe place to use the loo, people are vulnerable to disease and in danger of violence. When schools don't provide private toilets, girls are more likely to skip school, so damaging their education and limiting their potential.

The Salvation Army is constructing school toilets as part of clean water and sanitation projects around the world.

As part of *Spend a Penny, Give a Pound* you're invited to donate £1 for every time you use the loo. You can use the Toilet Tally https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JeIWx_BUir-xsCON-DbinezNnf-ummN/view

to keep count, then make your donation at <https://donate.salvationarmy.org.uk/water/~my-donation>