**Thesis:** We’ve all done something that scares us. Something that gives us pause. Maybe that was even the moment we decided to place our faith in Jesus. But Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. When we see who Christ is in our lives and the hope that He offers to us, it gives us a boldness to follow Him and live our lives for Him.

**Introduction:** Welcome back to The Jesus Podcast, a year of Biblical storytelling created to awaken our imagination and challenge our faith. I’m Zak, your host from Pray.com. This week's episode is an exciting continuation of the story of the Woman at the Well.

We’re a couple months into this podcast, and we’ve noticed that half of the people who listen to this podcast aren’t yet following the podcast officially on Spotify, Apple, and iHeart. Be sure to click that follow button so the episodes are sent directly to you. Do that is also a great way to support the podcast, since more followers helps us to be seen by more people. In this podcast space, it’s hard to get noticed. We appreciate your partnership in making the gospel known to the masses!

**Context:** As we learned last time, Zemira was a Samaritan woman and an outcast caught in her sin. Scorned by others, and even herself, she pulled herself away from community and accepted a life of solitude and rejection. But in His loving ways, Jesus wants to free her from the life she’s trapped in and show her the incredible potential she has in God’s eyes. Today’s story will not only give us more insight into Jesus’ interaction with the woman at the well, but will give us some important lessons in how we can have boldness before God and others. We’ll see the disciples' reaction to the scene they walk into as Jesus speaks to a Samaritan woman alone, how Jesus’ words and revelation that He’s the Messiah changes the heart of Zemira, and the exponential impact we can have when we find joy in the Lord, freedom from our sin, and new life in Christ.

**Message:** Think about the boldest person you know. What qualities do they possess? When we think of boldness, it’s often associated with the absence of fear. But in reality, boldness is the ability to overcome fear by finding strength and comfort in something or someone who helps us decide to stand for what we believe in. As we face our fear and embrace the love of Jesus, John tells us in *1 John 4:18 “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.”*

There’s four lessons about boldness that we learn from our story today.

**The first is that Jesus gives us the boldness to worship freely**. In her deflections, Zemira begins to talk about worship and asks where the proper place to worship is. At this, Jesus takes the time to expand her understanding of what genuine worship of the Lord is. He explains that the Samaritans don’t have a comprehensive understanding of worship but that the Father was calling true worshippers who would worship Him in Spirit and truth. Jesus explains that the heart of worship isn’t about the physical place from which we worship but the posture of our hearts. Worshiping isn’t a ritual that makes us right before God. It’s a response of adoration and appreciation for His glory and goodness in our lives and throughout creation. Worshiping is a moment of connection where we come before God to sing His praises alongside others who have found their hope in Him. When we accept that Jesus is the Messiah, He gives us the boldness to lift up His name in heartfelt and genuine worship.

**As the disciples enter the scene, we also learn that Jesus gives us the boldness to welcome others.** Perhaps some of us don’t fully relate with the woman at the well. Maybe you’ve been blessed by a great community and close friends. For you, there’s a lot to glean from the disciples in this situation. As they return from the town, they find Jesus in deep conversations with the woman at the well and are curious about His actions. In stiffening silence, they observe the Lord, trying to understand his intentions. But it’s apparent that their customs haven’t entirely left them, and are caught off guard by Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman. The disciples were learning that the gospel is often offensive to cultural norms. This world operates in contradiction to the kingdom of God, and Jesus comes to set it right side up. As they intently watched Jesus and His interaction with the woman at the well, the disciples were learning an important and necessary lesson about the gospel and the mission Jesus was setting them up. He was going to set the example for them. It seems that they had forgotten their own sense of loneliness and worthlessness they were experiencing when Jesus found them and called them to follow Him. But they were going to be reminded that the power of Christ is enough to save anyone from their sin and the call to follow Him is made available to everyone. No one is deserving of God’s love and salvation. To say that any one person can’t receive it is to say that none can. Everyone has a debt for their sin to pay. The very act of redemption speaks to Jesus paying that price through His sacrifice on the cross so that we could experience freedom from sin and a sense of belonging to Him. This sense of not only being forgiven by God by belonging to Him should give us the most tremendous sense of comfort even in the loneliest times.

**This story also teaches us that Jesus gives us the boldness to proclaim His name.** As Zemira held this comfort close, she ran off to the city to tell others about what just happened. She is so overjoyed at meeting with the Messiah that she can’t contain herself. Despite her past experiences with the people of Sycar, Zemira wanted others to meet Jesus to experience what she had just experienced. When we have a real encounter with Jesus, it changes the way we view our lives. It gives us a new perspective on what matters. For Zemira, that started with her ability to overcome her fear of others and the judgment she had always received from them. When Jesus’ thoughts towards us are more important than those of the people around us, we can boldly tell others about Him without fear. If we simply focus on His beauty, nothing else matters. But if that first step of faith to profess Jesus as Lord sounds intimidating, it’s okay. Proclaiming Jesus requires a certain level of vulnerability, but we can trust that what God says to us is true and that He will strengthen and protect us as we spread His gospel in every area of our lives. In Matthew 10, Jesus calls the twelve apostles to Himself to send them out to proclaim the message that “the Kingdom of God has come near.” As He gives them this task, He gives them the boldness of this promise in verse 21-20:

*“Do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”*

God gives us His Spirit to be bold, and provides to us the words to speak to others to make much of Jesus.

As Zemira begins talking with the people in Sycar, we learn our final lesson: **Jesus gives us the boldness to approach Him.** At first, the people meet Zemira as they would any other day, with passive comments meant to tear her down. But she holds on to the boldness she has found in Jesus and continues to urge them to follow her to meet the Messiah. As she turns around, heart full of hope, the Spirit moves in power as people begin to follow her to the place where her life changed forever. It wasn’t Zemira who was going to change their hearts. All she could do was act as a messenger. But sure enough, once the others have their own encounter with Jesus, they find the same boldness Zemira had to approach Jesus and worship Him as the One sent from God to free the world from its sin. The author of Hebrews tells us in *Hebrews 4:16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

If you want this same boldness, it simply starts with coming before Jesus, confessing your sins, and receiving His forgiveness and following Him into new life. Be bold and find strength in Him, because there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God.

In our next episode, we’ll face the concepts of grief, loss, and hope. How does Jesus meet us in our despair?

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