

**Purpose**

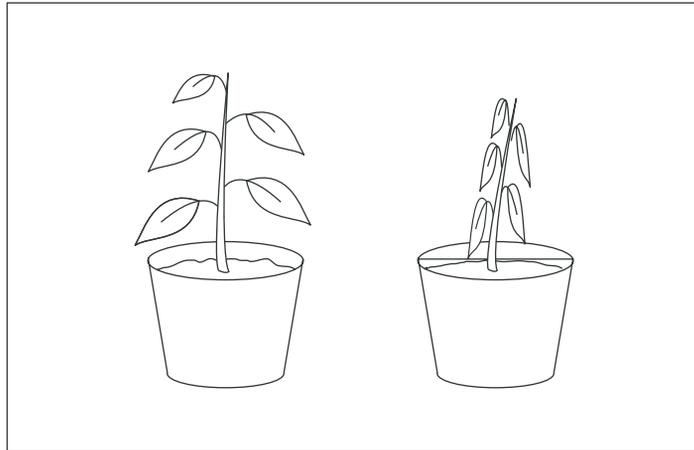
To help class members understand that to receive everlasting life, we must be “born again” and continue to follow Jesus Christ.

**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 3:1–22. Jesus teaches Nicodemus that all must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches that he is the Only Begotten Son of God, sent to save mankind.
  - b. John 4:1–42. Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well. Many Samaritans are converted.
2. Additional reading: Topical Guide, “Living Water,” 294.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class:
  - a. A healthy, well-watered plant and a plant that is wilted from lack of water (or draw on the chalkboard a healthy plant and a wilted plant, as shown in the attention activity).
  - b. A pitcher of water.
4. If the following materials are available, use some of them during the lesson:
  - a. The picture *Woman at the Well* (62169; Gospel Art Picture Kit 217).
  - b. “The Woman at the Well,” an eight-minute segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  - c. A map of Palestine in New Testament times (map 14 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible).
5. Suggestion for teaching: “The basic goal of teaching in the Church is to help bring about worthwhile changes in the lives of people. The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about gospel truths and principles” (Rex A. Skidmore, quoted in *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 83; see also 84).

**Suggested Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Display the healthy plant and the wilted plant (see the “Preparation” section), or draw them on the chalkboard as shown on the next page. Also display the pitcher of water.



- What happens to a plant if it does not receive water? What happens to us if we do not receive water?

Explain that just as we will die physically if we do not receive physical water, we will die spiritually if we do not receive spiritual water. This lesson tells of Jesus' teachings about being born of the water and the Spirit and about the living water he offers.

#### Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

#### 1. Jesus teaches Nicodemus that all must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

Discuss John 3:1–22. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Nicodemus was a leader in the Jewish community. He came to Jesus knowing that Jesus was “a teacher come from God” (John 3:2).

- What did Jesus teach Nicodemus that he must do to enter the kingdom of God? (See John 3:5.) What does it mean to be “born of water”? (John 3:5; to be baptized). How is baptism a symbol of rebirth? (Being immersed in water symbolizes the death or burial of our past sins; when we rise out of the water, we start a new life.) What does it mean to be “born . . . of the Spirit”? (John 3:5; to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost).
- Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that “Church members are not born again by the mere fact of baptism alone” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 1:142). Besides being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, what else is necessary in becoming born again? (See John 3:16, 18; Mosiah 5:1–7; 27:25–26; Alma 5:14–35; 22:15–18. You may want to have class members mark phrases in these verses that relate to being born again. A sample list is provided below. Point out that the verses from the Book of Mormon clarify what it means to be born again.)
  - a. Believing in Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 18).
  - b. Experiencing “a mighty change in . . . our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2; see also Alma 5:12–14, 26).

- c. Being “changed from [a] carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness” (Mosiah 27:25).
  - d. Becoming “[God’s] sons and daughters” (Mosiah 5:7; 27:25).
  - e. Becoming “new creatures” (Mosiah 27:26).
  - f. Having “the image of God engraven upon [our] countenances” (Alma 5:19; see also verse 14).
  - g. Repenting so our “garments [are] purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of [Christ]” (Alma 5:21; see also Alma 5:19, 33–34; 22:18).
- Elder McConkie also taught that being born again “doesn’t happen in an instant. [It] is a process” (“Jesus Christ and Him Crucified,” in *1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year*, 399). What can we do to continue this process throughout our lives? (See 2 Nephi 31:19–20.) How can we overcome discouragement or setbacks in our spiritual progress? What changes have you observed in yourself or someone else during the process of becoming born again?
  - Invite a class member to read John 3:14–18 aloud. How are these truths about the Savior’s mission related to his commandment that we be born again?
  - Jesus used the concepts of light and darkness to teach Nicodemus (John 3:19–21). Why do some choose darkness over light? How can we maintain the ability to love the light and shun darkness? What promises has the Lord made to those who come to the light? (See D&C 50:24; 88:67.)

## 2. Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 4:1–42. Display the map of Palestine. Explain that while Jesus and his disciples were traveling from Judea to Galilee (you may want to point out these places on the map), they stopped to rest at Jacob’s Well in Samaria. While Jesus sat by the well, a Samaritan woman came to draw water.

Display the picture of the woman at the well. If you are using the video presentation “The Woman at the Well,” show it now.

- The Jews had “no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9) and usually avoided Samaria when traveling. Yet Jesus deliberately went through Samaria. What does this reveal about him? Who are some “Samaritans” in today’s world? (Answers may include any person or group considered inferior.) How should we treat them?
- How did the Samaritan woman make it easier for Jesus to teach her? (See John 4:9, 11–12, 15, 19, 25. Answers may include that she was humble, she desired to know more, and she believed his words.) What can we do to become more receptive to the Savior’s teachings?
- How did the Samaritan woman change as Jesus spoke to her? How did Jesus help bring about this change? (Answers may include that he taught her at her level of understanding, he testified of himself, he used the symbol of water powerfully, and he showed compassion.) How can we follow his example as we teach others?
- Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he could give her “living water” (John 4:10). What do you think “living water” means? (See 1 Nephi 11:25;

D&C 63:23. Answers may include the doctrines of the gospel, the love of God, and the Atonement.) How can we obtain living water? How has this living water blessed you?

- The Samaritan woman had come to the well for water (John 4:7). However, after she spoke with Jesus, she left her pitcher at the well and went to tell others about the experience (John 4:28–29). What can we learn from her example?
- How were other people blessed because of the faith of the Samaritan woman? (See John 4:39–42.) How have you been blessed or seen others blessed for believing in the Lord? How can our faith affect those around us?

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## Conclusion

If you used the attention activity, display the plants and the water pitcher again. Explain that just as plants need water to live, we need to follow the Savior and his teachings to be born again and have everlasting life.

Testify of the truths you have discussed during the lesson. Challenge class members to seek Jesus Christ, follow him, and continue in the process of being born again.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “I am not the Christ, but . . . I am sent before him” (John 3:28)

- In John 3:25–36, what is John’s attitude about his role in relationship to the Savior’s? How does John’s attitude exemplify true discipleship? How can we apply this attitude to our service in the Church?

### 2. “The fields . . . are white already to harvest” (John 4:35)

- What did Jesus teach his disciples about missionary work in John 4:35–38? What did he mean when he said the field was white and ready to harvest? How did the Savior apply this same symbol in Doctrine and Covenants 4:1–4 and 75:3–5? Ask class members to share experiences they have had when sharing the gospel with others.

### 3. Jesus heals a nobleman’s son

Read and discuss John 4:46–54.

- What did the nobleman want of Jesus? (See John 4:46–47.) What was Jesus’ first reply to him? (See John 4:48.) How did the nobleman respond? (See John 4:49.)
- What was Jesus’ second response to the nobleman? (See John 4:50.) What was the nobleman’s reaction? (See John 4:50.) What was the result of the nobleman’s faith? (See John 4:51–54.) What can we learn from this account about the power of faith?