

FIELD-TESTED SERMON RESOURCES

SERMON SERIES

TRUSTED | BIBLICAL | FIELD-TESTED

Thank you for downloading this sample PDF from our Sermon Series line of resources.

When you stand up in front of students to proclaim the Word of God, you need trusted, creative, and biblically solid content. YM360's Sermon Series are exactly what you're looking for!

Field-tested, from-the-trenches of youth ministry, YM360 Sermon Series are complete detailed sermon outlines, discussion questions, and graphic packages designed to help you lead students closer to God through proclaiming His Word.

SERIES OVERVIEW FOR THE WHOLE STORY: A Story Of Wholeness Vs. Separation

When Jesus encountered the woman at the well, she didn't believe she was worthy of His attention. She had bought into her culture's labels and a story of separation. But Jesus was telling a different story. Jesus' story was one of wholeness, where all are loved no matter who they are or what they have done. Jesus is inviting His followers to look at the world around them and, instead of seeing separation, see people who are deeply loved. The invitation of this series is to begin to believe in Jesus' story of wholeness so we can love the world as Jesus did.

"THE WHOLE STORY" COVERS THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES AND PASSAGES:

- **Session 1 - The Whole Story (John 4:1-14) |** Stories are the lens through which we view the world. Jesus tells a story of wholeness, where all are equally loved and valued, no matter who they are or what they have done. It is a story of ultimate belonging, and it's how we are designed to live.
- **Session 2 - The Five Elephants In The Room (John 4:13-26) |** Before we can take part in the work Jesus is doing in the world, the story of wholeness must become real inside of us. We have to begin to understand and embrace that we are loved and valued no matter what through the atoning work of Jesus.
- **Session 3 - Now What? (John 4:27-38) |** When we begin to let Jesus' whole story transform us, we are invited to take part in sharing it with the world. This calling is fulfilling, and it looks different for each follower of Jesus.
- **Session 4 - Beginning And End (John 4:39-42, Ephesians 1:9-10) |** Stories have the power to shape the world around us. The whole story is the most compelling story there is, the story we were made to hear, and it begins and ends with Jesus.

"THE WHOLE STORY" IS PART OF YM360'S SERMON SERIES LINE OF RESOURCES AND IS IDEAL FOR:

- Any large group setting
- Mid-week youth service
- "Master teacher" format

BACKGROUND SLIDES, PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK, AND MORE . . .

EVERY SERMON SERIES FROM YM360 COMES WITH:

- **Detailed Sermon Outlines** – Every Sermon Series comes with detailed sermon outlines. Teach them "as is" or adapt them to suit your specific ministry context.
- **Discussion questions** – Questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives. You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go.
- **Title and Background slides** – These are designed to be dropped into your favorite presentation software to help you build a creative environment around your sermon. Use them as a backdrop for song lyrics, Scripture passages, teaching points, and any illustrations you choose to display.
- **Artwork for promo and social media** – Social media images, web banners, and a printable poster file are included. Perfect for newsletters, websites, social media platforms, or print them off for posters and bulletin inserts.
- **Logo (including native logo design files)** – We include a logo file and the native design files to allow you to use the logo in ways you see fit.
- **100% downloadable and adaptable**

Each YM360 Sermon Series comes with title and background slides, promotional art (including Instagram images), and logo treatments. Here is what to expect.

BACKGROUND AND TITLE SLIDES



PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK



INSTAGRAM IMAGES



LOGO TREATMENT

the
whole
story

NOTE: Each YM360 Sermon Series also comes with the native files of the logo in case you want to replicate the design for other uses.

The Whole Story Sermon Series | Session 1: The Whole Story

How To Use A YM360 Sermon Series | YM360 Sermon Series are designed for use by a communicator in a large group setting. Each series download provides various elements such as a detailed sermon outline, suggestions on illustrations or images, Scripture passages, background information, and application points that you can use to craft a message that speaks to your students in your specific context.

This series download also includes discussion questions that can be used to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives.

Make sure to leverage the series logo, title slide, background slides, and social media artwork this YM360 Sermon Series provides for promotion and message support. We've even included the native design files to allow you the freedom to use the logo in any way that meets your needs.

This YM360 Sermon Series was created to be suitable for all types of churches and ministry environments. It was intentionally designed to provide you with everything you need while also allowing you the freedom to make it fit your particular ministry context. Nobody knows your ministry like you do. Therefore, we encourage you to make any adjustments to this series you feel are necessary to best fit the needs of your students, church, or ministry context.

A Prayer Before You Prepare | God, thank you for the opportunity to share your story with my students. As I prepare for this message, I pray that you bring your total and abundant love for me and these students to the forefront of my mind. I pray that through me, you show these students that they are loved by you and belong as they are. Inspire us to work together to advance your Kingdom. I pray for the strength to be vulnerable about how your story has affected my life. And I pray that these students, whom you have placed in my span of care, leave knowing you just a bit more than they did before they heard this message. Amen.

The Whole Story Teaching Guide | A One-Page Glimpse Of Everything You Need To Prepare

Series Snapshot | *The Whole Story* is a sermon series rooted in Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well in John 4 that will teach your students to view themselves and the world around them through the lens of wholeness, unity, and belonging, which is how Jesus viewed the woman.

Series Overview | When Jesus encountered the woman at the well, she didn't believe she was worthy of His attention. She had bought into her culture's labels and a story of separation. But Jesus was telling a different story. Jesus' story was one of wholeness, where all are loved no matter who they are or what they have done. Jesus is inviting His followers to look at the world around them and, instead of seeing separation, see people who are deeply loved. The invitation of this series is to begin to believe in Jesus' story of wholeness so we can love the world as Jesus did.

- **Session 1 - The Whole Story (John 4:1-14)** | Stories are the lens through which we view the world. Jesus tells a story of wholeness, where all are equally loved and valued, no matter who they are or what they have done. It is a story of ultimate belonging, and it's how we are designed to live.
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The Whole Story Series | Session 1

Large Group Teaching Summary | Jesus lives in a world that was dominated by labels and a story of separation. Our world is still like that. But Jesus tells a different story, a story of wholeness, where everyone belongs and is loved and invited, no matter who they are or what they have done. Jesus' story, the whole story, will satisfy and transform those who believe it because it is the most powerful and compelling story in the world.

Key Takeaway | Jesus tells a story of ultimate belonging that has the power to transform all who believe and place their faith in Him.

Scripture Focus | John 4:1-14

What You May Need | *Optional Illustration:* Reframe- A powerful retelling of a story (personal story); *Optional Illustration:* My Story- A time when you felt the love and acceptance of God deeply (personal story).

I. Introduction

A. Today, we are starting a new series on a specific and important conversation that Jesus has in John 4. We are going to talk about the stories we believe and how they shape us. The woman Jesus was talking to believed a certain story about herself and the world, and it is a story that is still alive and well in our world today. You might even believe it to be true about yourself. But Jesus told her (and is telling us) a different story. Jesus' story changed her life, and it could change ours too. Because that is what stories do. Here is what I mean.

B. Optional illustration: Reframe

1. ***NOTE: Tell a story about a time when your view of something changed because someone reframed it for you. In other words, you heard someone tell you a different story about something you had previously thought you understood, and it changed your perspective on it.***

C. In this series, we will see Jesus tell a different story, i.e., offer a different lens to view the world to a woman who needs to hear it (and to us who still need to hear it today). You see, this woman believed a story of labels and separation that kept her from experiencing the love of God and the invitation into a full life. This story is still alive and well today, so it is important to know where to spot it and how Jesus responded to it. The truth is that the stories we believe shape the way we view ourselves and the world around us. Here's what I mean:

II. Tension

A. STORIES HAVE PROFOUND CREATIVE POWER.

1. Think about it: do you know anyone who believes that life is just a trial to be endured? This is a lens through which they view life. It is a story they have told themselves about how life works. What has that story done to who they are, how they view themselves, and how they view the challenges that come with everyday life?
2. Now compare them to someone else you may know, someone who believes life to be an adventure to be embarked upon. What has that story done to who they are?
3. How about the story we tell ourselves about the people around us? Do we live in a dog-eat-dog world where everyone is out to get us? Or are we all in this together (cue the High School Musical soundtrack), working together to make the world a better place for all?
 - a) Can you see how these two stories would shape how you view the people around you in different ways?
4. Or how about the story that you tell yourself when you look in the mirror? This is one that a lot of us can really relate to. Are you grateful for who God made you to be, someone God says is "very good"? Or do you tell yourself that you are not enough? Think about the different impacts those two stories have on your view of yourself.

B. This is what I am talking about when I talk about the stories we believe and how they are the lens through which we view the world. Stories have the power to create and

shape our experience. THE STORIES WE TELL OURSELVES AND BELIEVE ABOUT OURSELVES ARE PROFOUNDLY POWERFUL. And because they are so powerful, it is critically important that we know which stories to believe.

1. That is where Jesus comes in because if anyone can tell a story that is worth believing, it is likely to be Jesus.

III. Scripture

A. Read JOHN 4:1-6.

1. *Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.*

B. In John 4, Jesus learned that a group of people called the Pharisees had noticed that Jesus' movement was starting to gain momentum. So, Jesus departed on a journey to go to the region of Galilee, which was the Pharisees' home base. In other words, Jesus left where He was to go where the Pharisees were. And along that journey, Jesus had to go through Samaria. These details matter. Why? Because they add power and clarity to Jesus' story.

C. Who were the Pharisees? They were religious leaders who studied, interpreted, and taught Scripture. They were sort of like pastors. Many Pharisees taught a specific way of viewing the world and the people in it. They taught that the world was split into two kinds of people: God's people and sinners. Us and them. There were people who were in and people who were out, people who belonged and people who didn't, people who were lovable and people who were not.

1. This way of viewing the world is very much alive and well today. We are constantly bombarded with ways to separate ourselves from the people around us. We base it on intelligence, attractiveness, economic status, popularity, skin color, athleticism, and so on. There are people who are in, and people who are out, people who are "good enough," and people who are not. There is an "us," and there is a "them".
2. This is a very specific story about how the world is set up. It causes walls to be built between people who are different than each other. It is a story that separates people, so we are going to call it "THE STORY OF SEPARATION."

D. So Jesus is on His way to confront the people who are teaching this "story of separation," and on the way, He goes through Samaria. Who were the Samaritans? The Samaritans were a people group who were distant family members of the Jewish people. They were part Jewish but had adopted a blended and untrue pattern of religious rituals and worship practiced by the Jews. Basically, they were the estranged family members of the Jewish people. A real-life "we don't talk about Bruno" situation.

E. Because of this, Jewish people hated Samaritans. They didn't speak to Samaritans, they didn't do business with Samaritans, they wouldn't live near Samaritans, they wouldn't

associate with Samaritans, and they even prayed against Samaritans. These Samaritans were cast out, looked down upon, and judged. Because the separation between these two people groups was so fierce, the Samaritans lived far away from the Jews so they would never have to cross paths. But Jesus somehow finds himself in the Samaritan city of Sychar.

- F. Jesus is on a journey to the region of Galilee, which is where the Pharisees were, right? On the way, He stops in Sychar, Samaria. But here is the thing: Sychar is way out of the way from the road to Galilee. Think about it like this: if Jesus was traveling from Los Angeles to New York City, “stopping in Sychar” would be like taking a quick pit stop in Austin, Texas. It just doesn’t make sense, but Jesus does it anyway. This means that Jesus wanted to go there, He went out of his way to go through Samaria. Why?
- G. Read JOHN 4:7-14.
1. *A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*
- H. When Jesus sits at the well, He asks the woman to give Him a drink. Now, this might not seem like a big deal to us, but it was back then. To share food or drink with someone was to consider them a friend, an equal. As a Jewish person, this was a radical move on Jesus’ part because it was a massive no-no for Jews and Samaritans to mix. But Jesus viewed the world differently; He was telling a different story. How does the woman react? The woman is shocked. Why? Because she has bought into the story of separation.
- I. **THE STORY OF SEPARATION DISCONNECTS US FROM THE WORLD AROUND US.**
1. The story of separation deeply affected how this woman viewed herself and the world around her. At first, she seemed unable to connect with Jesus or even consider being loved by Him. Instead, she was highly suspicious. She must have been thinking: “Why would someone like Jesus be kind to someone like me?” This is what happens to us when we believe the story of separation. We become disconnected from the world around us. We start to build walls between ourselves and the world, and we enclose ourselves within them.
 2. In our nice little cocoons, the story of separation can either puff us up and make us feel like we are better than everyone around us or drag us down and make us feel worthless by reminding us of all the ways we don’t measure up to the people around us. These walls make us feel alone because they keep us from

loving ourselves and the people around us, and they keep us from being open to the gift of life that God has given us.

3. The story of separation has created a world filled with wars, economic injustice, corruption, bullying, exclusion, racism, sexism, and inequality of all kinds rooted in selfishness, fear, and the vilification of our differences. It is not a story worth believing, but luckily for the woman and for us, Jesus is telling a different story, a story of wholeness. Let's call it the "whole story."

J. **IN JESUS' STORY, THE WHOLE STORY, EVERYONE IS VALUED, NO MATTER WHO WE ARE, WHERE WE COME FROM, OR WHAT WE HAVE DONE, WE ARE WHOLE.**

1. The woman, believing the story of separation, looked at herself and Jesus and believed they should be separate, but when Jesus saw the woman, though she was a Samaritan, He saw her as a friend. Jesus is out to reconcile, embrace, and include even those considered enemies. Jesus offers people the chance to become part of the "whole."
2. The story that Jesus tells with His life is a story where everyone has the chance to belong. Differences are acknowledged and celebrated, but they do not separate people from each other or disqualify people from being a part of God's family. Anyone who has come to saving faith in Jesus is part of one big family. A family that is whole.
3. Jesus was showing the woman (and us) the world as it could be. The world could be a place that is unified, loving, and whole. Can you imagine what that would be like? Can you imagine what it would be like if everyone believed the whole story? Oh, how it would transform our world.
4. Through the simple act of asking for a drink, Jesus was breaking down the wall that the story of separation had built between the Jews and the Samaritans and showing what the world could be, a world where all belong, where all are loved, and where all are invited.

K. **The whole story is the most compelling and powerful story in the world, and it is worth believing.**

1. The stories we believe shape the way we view ourselves and the world around us, so it is critically important that we know what stories are worth believing. The whole story, the story that Jesus tells, is worth more than any other.
2. When we believe in the whole story, when we see ourselves and the people around us, people who all have the chance to belong and be loved, we open ourselves to love the world the way Jesus loved the woman at the well. We connect with those who are different than us and see their beauty and value. We include those who have been previously excluded. We find joy in the gift of loving and serving the world. We help the lost find a home, we help the hurting find comfort, and we help the lonely find love. We make the world a better place. And we are satisfied.
3. Jesus says to the woman that whoever drinks what He offers will never be thirsty again. Why? Because it is a story that is worth believing. A story where

our meaning and purpose are found. A story that transforms us into the kind of people who love the world as Jesus did. It is the most compelling and powerful story in the world. And it is a story that includes all of you.

L. *Optional illustration*

1. ***NOTE: You can tell a bit of your story here. If there was a moment when you realized how much God loved you, as you are, or a time when you realized how much God loved someone who was different than you, tell what it was like and how it transformed you.***

IV. Application

- A. So what does this have to do with real life? Here are two steps you can take to begin to embrace the whole story:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE PLACES IN YOUR LIFE WHERE THE STORY OF SEPARATION HAS TAKEN ROOT.

- a) This could be for yourself or others. Is there anything about yourself that makes you feel like you are not qualified to be a part of God's family? Do you find yourself comparing yourself to others? Are there people who you feel don't deserve to be loved by God? Ask yourself these questions, and the answers will give you a hint of where the story of separation has taken root in your life.

2. PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE YOU DON'T LIKE.

- a) This is a practical one. When we spend time praying for those we feel separated from, the walls we have built between us and them begin to slowly fall. We begin to desire the best for them and love them as Jesus does. This process is the whole story taking root in our souls.

V. Gospel

- A. What is the "whole story" we've been talking about? It's the Gospel. When Jesus is talking to the woman at the well, He says that those who drink the water He gives, who follow Him and give their lives to Him, that water will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life. In other words, Jesus says that those who choose to repent and believe in Him will discover the life that they were made for.
- B. If any of you have never made the decision to follow Jesus, you are invited to right now. You are invited to be a part of God's whole family, where you know you are loved and belong, no matter what. If you would like to make the decision to follow Jesus and embrace the whole story, I want to meet with you when this is over.

VI. Conclusion

- A. The stories we believe matter because they shape how we view ourselves and the world around us.

The Whole Story Sermon Series | Session 1: The Whole Story

- B. THE STORY THAT JESUS TOLD, THE WHOLE STORY, IS A STORY WHERE EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE OR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE, HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FAMILY OF GOD. That is the story He shares with the woman at the well, and that is the story you and I are invited into now. Over the next couple of sessions, we are going to unpack this conversation a little more and see how this story that Jesus is telling transforms her life—and how it can transform my life and your life as well. It's going to be fun.

- C. Let's pray.

The Whole Story Sermon Series | Session 1 Discussion Questions: The Whole Story

Series Overview | When Jesus encountered the woman at the well, she didn't believe she was worthy of His attention. She had bought into her culture's labels and a story of separation. But Jesus was telling a different story. Jesus' story was one of wholeness, where all are loved no matter who they are or what they have done. Jesus is inviting His followers to look at the world around them and, instead of seeing separation, see people who are deeply loved. The invitation of this series is to begin to believe in Jesus' story of wholeness so we can love the world as Jesus did.

Large Group Teaching Summary | Jesus lives in a world that was dominated by labels and a story of separation. Our world is still like that. But Jesus tells a different story, a story of wholeness, where everyone belongs and is loved and invited, no matter who they are or what they have done. Jesus' story, the whole story, will satisfy and transform those who believe it because it is the most powerful and compelling story in the world.

Key Takeaway | Jesus tells a story of ultimate belonging that has the power to transform all who believe and place their faith in Him.

Scripture Focus | John 4:1-14

The Whole Story | Session 1 Discussion Questions

You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives.

Get Them Talking | An Optional Opening Question To Get Students Talking

1. Think of a movie that you love. What does that story teach you about what life is all about? Is there a lesson that you can take from it?

Discussion Questions

1. Read John 4:1-14. What does this teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself?
2. What are some common ways people view life? Is it an adventure or a trial? Are we on our own or in it together?
3. How does what we believe about the nature of our life affect how we live it? What about what you—how does what you believe about yourself affect how you see yourself and the world around you?
4. In the message, we heard about “the story of separation,” which tells us that we are on our own, separate from those around us. Can you think of an example of the story of separation present in the world today? How about the story of separation being present in your own life?
5. How do you think the woman must have felt when Jesus asked her for a drink?
6. How did Jesus challenge the story of separation in His conversation with the woman at the well?
7. How can we help others who believe harmful stories to see a different perspective?
8. What can we learn from Jesus' example of how He interacted with people from different backgrounds or social statuses?
9. Jesus told a different story, “the whole story,” where everyone belongs and is loved, no matter who they are or what they have done. How would you change the way you interacted with the people around you if you believed this story that Jesus was telling? How would believing it change the way you think about yourself?
10. What is one way you can see yourself differently because of the story Jesus is telling you, and three ways you can share the story of wholeness with others this week?