Grow Group Summary and Discussion Guide

Speaker: Pastor Tony
Title: The Woman at the Well
Series: According to John
Text: John 4

- Focus on John 4: Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well.
- Importance of understanding the cultural and historical context without modern biases.
- Assumptions about her past are just that- Assumptions; her story was probably more complex and potentially less scandalous than often presumed.
- Her past was probably messy, filled with trauma or difficult circumstances, but it's not the main point.
- The woman's response shows faith; she believes Jesus' message despite her past and cultural barriers.
- Contrasts her response with Nicodemus: a Jewish man and religious leader who hesitated and didn't openly follow Jesus.
- Examples of other biblical figures (Zacchaeus, the rich young ruler) demonstrate varied responses to their sins/self made barriers being brought into the light
- Need for personal reflection: what barriers or darkness are we holding onto that prevent us from fully accepting Jesus?

Grow Group Questions:

1) Today we are continuing to go through the Gospel of John, focusing on Chapter 4. Have someone pray as you start your time together.
2) (Icebreaker) "What sport would you play if you were athletic?" Is a popular question on Social media right now to make fun of your friends. What other questions would a person hate to be asked?
3) Take Turns reading through John 4. The Sermon only focused on the first story in it (1-42), but feel free to read the whole Chapter.
4) What stood out to you from the text?
5) In the Sermon, Tony talked about the different historical assumptions people make when reading the stories in the bible.

    a) For the story of the Samaritan Woman in particular, what different assumptions have you heard/had yourself?
    b) Can you think of any other bible stories where people have inaccurate takeaways because of historical assumptions?
    c) What can we practically do to prevent the different cultural settings to ours lead to us misinterpreting the stories?
6) Tony talked about the different barriers we put up to distance ourselves from God. What barriers could the Samaritan woman and Nicodemus have had?
    a) What are some examples of modern day barriers that prevent people from accepting the Gospel message?
    b) What have been some things in your past that led to you putting up walls between yourself and God?
7) (If you think the group is open) Nicodemus didn't seem able to give up his position to fully accept Christ, and the Rich young ruler didn't seem able to give up his wealth. What is a struggle for you to give up?