

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

God Encounters

What Does It Look Like to Step Into Our God Encounter?

July 27-July 30, 2023

Start Talking

Pastor Jackson shared his experience at the Butterfly Exhibit at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Have you read or studied something, but when you experienced it, it was completely different than what you thought? Share your experience.

Main Idea

This week we wrapped up our series, God Encounters, and discovered what it looks like to step into our own God encounter. The encounters people had with God that we've studied over the last few weeks are not just "campfire stories" to hear and learn about. Thousands of years later, God still wants to meet with His people today.

Personalize

1. Pastor Jackson explained that a God encounter is an emotional experience rooted in the truth of scripture. Read Matthew 22:34-38 and John 4:21-24. How are we to love God? How are we to worship? Pastor Jackson also referenced Paul's letter in Colossians 1 & 2. When you have time, now or later, read these chapters on how to stay rooted in the truth.
2. We can naturally lean into one of two directions when it comes to experiencing God: the emotional or the intellectual. Where do you naturally lean? Have you ever "chased the encounter more than God Himself?" Pastor Jackson said experiencing God always begins with the truth of scripture and our response to it (we have a role to play in our experience). Read James 4:7-8. What is our role?
3. Pastor Jackson said that each of our lives are built on something. It could be our job, money, freedom, relationships, etc. What do you feel your life is rooted in? Why do we need to be rooted in scripture? Is it because it's the one thing that will never change?

Let's Do It! Commit to a step and live it out this week!

1. Pastor Jackson gave us three ways to stay in the truth and not let our emotions take over our thoughts and decisions. What were the three things? And how and why are they important?
2. Read 2 Peter 1:4-5. How can you "make every effort to respond to God's promises and experience God in spirit and truth this week?"
3. As we enter the new Fall season, what area is God asking you to press a little further and experience Him more? How will you "taste and see that the Lord is good" and be filled with the Holy Spirit? What does that look like in your life for this to happen? What will be your response, and what are your next steps?

Let's Pray

Father, thanks for Who You are. Thank you for being a personal God who gives us the privilege to experience You. Lord, we want to go all in and experience You fully, both in Spirit and Truth. Lord, we ask that if there are any areas we need to press in further and experience You more, please give us the courage and strength to do so. We love You and praise You. In Jesus' name, we pray. AMEN.

Key Scriptures

Matthew 22:34-38 (NLT)

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" Jesus replied, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.

John 4:21-24 (NLT)

Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in Truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in Truth."

2 Peter 1:4-5 (NLT)

And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises.

Psalm 34:8 (NIV)

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

James 4:7-8 (NLT)

So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you.

Luke 10:21 (NLT)

At that same time Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and he said, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike."