

ENCOUNTERS with JESUS

The Approachable Christ



Rev. Eric Smith
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Sermon Summary

In the Encounters with Jesus series we are looking at interactions of real people with Jesus as the Christ. No, “Christ” is not Jesus’ last name, it is, however, a title which means “messiah” or “anointed one.” The Jewish people of the Ancient Near East were looking for the Messiah. Many claimed to be the Messiah, but were put to death never to be heard from again. One, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, was put to death and rose three days later. Encounters with Him were life-changing then and they are just as life changing today.

In this study, we will see the approachability of Jesus as he interacts with a nameless woman at a well.

“People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive.” Blaise Pascal, the 17th Century French mathematician, philosopher and theologian

Diving Into The Message

RELAX, Jesus Knows Where You Are. (John 4:4-8)

4 He had to go through Samaria on the way.

John 4:4 NLT

REACT, Jesus Can Handle Your Questions. (John 4:9-14)

12 And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?"

John 4:12 NLT

RELAX, (Yes, relax.) Jesus Knows Who You Are. (John 4:15-18)

16 "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. John 4:16 NLT

REDIRECT, Jesus Does NOT Chase Squirrels - It's About Worship. John 4:19-24

23 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. 24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23&24 NLT

REPENT, Jesus IS the Christ & He Desires What IS Best for You! (John 4:25&26)

25 The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." 26 Then Jesus told her, "I am the Messiah!"

John 4:25&26 NLT Life Application

Discussion Questions:

When traveling from Judea to Galilee, Jesus, according to John 4:4 “had to go through Samaria.” Historical Context: There was long-standing animosity (racial and religious hatred) between the Jews and the Samaritans. There was also an alternate route from Judea to Galilee that the most devout Jews traveled to avoid Samaria.

1. How do you understand the statement, “He (Jesus) had to travel through Samaria?”
2. While Jesus may not currently take literal, geographical routes in the flesh, He is at work. How have you experienced His intentionality in your life?

In Ephesians 2:14 we read, “For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.”

3. How can we follow the example of Christ in overcoming long standing racial and religious prejudices?

The nameless woman is representative of all those who have found and currently find themselves marginalized. Jesus recognizes the humanity and the “imago dei” (The term imago Dei “Image of God” refers most fundamentally to two things: first, God's own self-actualization through humankind; and second, God's care for humankind.) in every human being.

4. How did Jesus demonstrate the value He saw in this woman? How does the woman’s initial response compare to interactions you have had with Christ?
5. How can we follow the model of Jesus in interacting with those around us who are “different” than us?

In verses 21 - 24, Jesus uses the word worship SIX times. To “worship” literally means to show reverence or homage by kissing the hand; to bow one’s self in adoration. British author C.S. Lewis wrote, “Where men are forbidden to honour a king they honour millionaires, athletes, or film-stars instead: even famous prostitutes or gangsters. For spiritual nature, like bodily nature, will be served; deny it food and it will gobble poison.” In John 4, Jesus speaks to the nameless woman about the possibility of TRUE worship.

6. How does Jesus make true worship possible?
7. Do you believe every human heart worships something or someone? Explain.

To repent means to change your mind. Repentance can also be described as turning from sin and self to Someone, Christ Jesus. There is a repentance which leads to eternal life and there are “mini” repentances along the way due to our getting off course.

8. How did Jesus’ declaration that he was the Messiah change the Samaritan’s woman’s life? How does this reminder directly from Jesus, “I am the Messiah!” impact you today?