

# Encountering Jesus

## A Study Through The Gospel Of John

Jesus is the most influential person to ever live. Just a cursory look at human history bears out this reality. More books have been written about Jesus than anyone who has ever lived, and the Bible, which records Jesus' life and ministry, is the best-selling book of all time. Jesus has been the impetus for the formation of hospitals, feeding programs, orphanages, and other humanitarian organizations that care for the poor, sick and marginalized. Jesus has impacted the arts, science, politics, marriage, economics, ethics, education and human rights. When you survey history, one reality is indisputable: No one has impacted the world more than Jesus.

Jesus' impact is staggering when you consider where he came from and what he accomplished. Jesus was born into a poor family with no social clout or political influence. He never married. He never wrote a book. He wasn't a great military leader. He never held a political office. He didn't receive a formal education. Jesus spent most of his life in relative obscurity. Then at the age of 30, he launched a public ministry which ended three years later with his execution on a cross.

Nevertheless, Jesus' impact continues to this day. So a question has to be asked: What impact is Jesus making in your life?

My guess is that Jesus is impacting you. On some level you want to know him and love him. After all, why would you be reading this study guide or attending a church like Faith, if Jesus weren't up to something? And yet my guess is that you long to follow Jesus more fully.

That is certainly where I'm at. I love Jesus and yet I want to love him more. I've been changed by Jesus and yet I feel there is more of my life that needs to be surrendered to him. I trust in Jesus and yet I sense in this season an invitation from God to trust him more.

Often, Jesus impacts our lives as we encounter him in the Bible, and one of the best ways to encounter Jesus in the Bible is to meditate on the Gospels.<sup>1</sup> So for the next season at Faith we are going to encounter Jesus by working through the Gospel of John.

The Gospel of John has been called the simplest and yet the most profound of the Gospels.<sup>2</sup> It is a pool in which those who do not believe can safely wade, and those who long to encounter Jesus more fully can dive deep. It was written by John, one of Jesus' closest friends. After Jesus' death and resurrection, John spent his life mulling over his encounters with Jesus and recording them so that we might encounter the Savior who so greatly impacted his life.

I do not pretend to know all of what Jesus will do in your life during this series, but I can't help but believe that it will be significant. After all, no one has impacted the world more than Jesus. So my prayer is that when we reach the end of this series, we, like John, will have stories of our encounters with Jesus and how our lives have been changed.

Every Blessing,  
Pastor Charlie for the Preaching Team

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1 The Gospels are the first four books of the New Testament. They were written by Jesus' first followers.

2 *John*, N.T. Wright



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# INTRODUCTION TO SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

No one is born into this world with a theology. So each generation must rediscover the truths of Scripture for itself.

Preaching the Bible is one of the primary tools God has given the church for this to take place.

Small groups are the place where the preaching at Faith is applied and where our church is encouraged to live out God's word. Members of Faith's small groups take time each week to discuss the previous Sunday's sermon, share specific insights from the Bible and care for one another so that, as a church, we grow up to maturity in Jesus.

This study guide has been put together to give you an overview of our current sermon series so that you know where we are going and so that you are prepared for great discussions in your small group.

Here is an overview of what you will find for each week in this study guide:

**Main Passage** – This is the passage the teaching pastor will preach from.

**Secondary Passages** – These passages help to unpack and explain the main passage.

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation** – This is one passage to memorize and meditate on throughout the week so that at all times you are giving Jesus an opportunity to work in your life.

**Overview** – This is an overview of what will be discussed in small group this week.

**Opening Question** – This is a general question meant to spark conversation.

**Discussion Questions** – These are questions related to the Bible passages.

**Application Section** – These are questions and ideas for applying the Bible to your life.

**Table Time With Kids** – These are questions and ideas for families with young kids.

These materials are not meant to be a rigid formula for your small group, but rather a means for intentional study, discussion and life application so that ultimately, as a church, we grow together to maturity in Jesus.

We hope you find this helpful.



## **What is a small group?**

Small groups at Faith are small gatherings of people from Faith that meet regularly for friendship, prayer and Bible study.

Each small group is unique because it is shaped by the people who attend. However, at the heart of each small group is a desire to see a tight-knit community form that is marked by a growing love for Jesus and for the other people in the small group.

## **Why should I join a small group?**

We are made for friendship with God and others. When we are not known and loved by others, we suffer because we are not experiencing all that God created us to experience. Additionally, life is too difficult to journey alone. Therefore, small groups are a place where we can connect in friendship with other people through the ups and downs of life.

## **How do I get connected to a small group?**

The easiest way to get connected to a small group is to go to [www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/smallgroups](http://www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/smallgroups). You can also sign up on Sunday by filling out a Connect card. Finally, if you would like to join a small group, you can call the church at 970-226-2095.





**Title:** Encountering Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 1:1–18

**Secondary Passages:** Hebrews 1:1–4, Colossians 1:15–20

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:14

**Overview:** Starting something new can sometimes be overwhelming because of all that is unknown. There is a certain comfort and safety with clarity, so as the Gospel of John opens, John gives us a clear picture of what we are about to encounter: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*<sup>1</sup>

There is nothing understated in these verses. Unlike two of the other Gospels, which begin with the unassuming birth of Jesus, John gives us a grand and imposing theological vision of who we will encounter as his story unfolds and his proposal is somewhat staggering: ***You are about to encounter the living God.***

In the Old Testament, encounters with the living God were somewhat terrifying. When Isaiah encountered God, he fell on his face and cried out, “*Woe is me!*”<sup>2</sup> And yet the grand opening of John’s gospel isn’t meant to scare us off, for *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*<sup>3</sup> In other words, Jesus came to welcome us into God’s presence, and so the invitation in John’s introduction is to receive Jesus and find life in his name.

**Opening Question**

- Talk about a time when you felt intimidated or overwhelmed at the start of something new.

**Discussion Questions**

- Read John 1:1–18. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What does John 1:1–18 reveal about Jesus?
- The theme of John’s gospel is something like this: If you want to know who God is, encounter Jesus. How does knowing Jesus enhance our understanding of God?
- How does our understanding of God get off track when we think about God without encountering Jesus?

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1 John 1:1–4

2 Isaiah 6:5

3 John 1:14

- John tells us that many people did not receive Jesus. What keeps people from receiving Jesus? What do people miss out on when they do not receive Jesus?
- How does believing in the name of Jesus impact someone?
- What does it mean to be a child of God?
- How do you feel when you remember that you are a child of God?
- What does Jesus' willingness to become a human being reveal about God?

### ***Application Questions***

- In what ways would your life be different if you had never encountered Jesus?
- What impact would you like Jesus to make in your life as you study John?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 1:1–18. What stands out to you from these verses?
- According to John, who is Jesus? *Jesus is God.*
- Why did Jesus come into the world? *So that you might encounter him and know who God is.*
- What happens when you receive Jesus? *You become a child of God.*
- What does it mean to be a child of God? *God loves you and you belong to him.*
- How do you feel when you are loved?

**Title:** The Witness And The Word

**Main Passage:** John 1:19–34

**Secondary Passages:** Deuteronomy 18:15–18, Isaiah 9:1–7, Exodus 12:1–14

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*

2 Corinthians 4:5

**Overview:** When John the Baptist started his ministry, the world was in tremendous confusion. At that time, there was massive political unrest in Palestine. The Jews were being mistreated by the Romans. Some of the religious leaders were capitulating to the government by allowing gentile leaders to make sacrifices at the Temple in Jerusalem. Additionally, some of the Jewish citizens were leading revolts against those in political power.

Many people thought that John was God's solution for the unrest and confusion in Palestine. As a matter of fact, as John's ministry grew, people were eager to ascribe to him titles and offices from the Old Testament like "the Christ" and "the Prophet." For centuries, the Jews had read in the Scriptures that God would send a great prophet to sort out the mess they were in. This prophet would be called the Christ, which means anointed one.

If John had embraced these titles, thousands of people would have rallied around him and the whole world would have been tossed into greater confusion and unrest.

John wisely refused the titles that people were so eager to give him. He clearly didn't want anyone thinking he was a big deal. Instead, he pointed people to Jesus as God's great solution. Borrowing from imagery in the Old Testament, John said, *"I am merely a workman making a road for the Messiah."*<sup>1</sup> With these words, John the Baptist moved the attention away from himself and put the spotlight clearly on Jesus.

From John we learn a great lesson about humility. Humility comes when we recognize that we are not the solution to people's problems. The solution always has been and always will be Jesus. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

This week is a chance for us to thank Jesus for being the great solution to all of our problems.

### Opening Question

- Why do you think people like to be the solution to other people's problems?

### Discussion Questions

- Read John 1:19–34. What stands out to you from these verses?

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1 A loose translation of John 1:23.

- A group of priests and Levites came to John the Baptist and asked, “Who are you?” What were John’s responses to their question?
- What do you learn about the character of John the Baptist from his refusal to accept the titles and offices that people were ascribing to him?
- What does John the Baptist say about Jesus?
- Read Isaiah 9:1–7. What does this passage teach us to expect from the Christ?
- Read Exodus 12:1–14. What connections to the Exodus story is John the Baptist making by saying that Jesus is the Lamb of God?
- What does John 1:29 reveal about what people need most?
- What does John the Baptist say about his role in helping people know and follow Jesus?

### ***Application Questions***

- When are you tempted to believe that you are the solution to someone’s problems?
- When are you tempted to think that someone other than Jesus is the solution to your problems?
- What qualities from John the Baptist do you want to imitate? Why?
- John talks about preparing a way for people to encounter Jesus. What prepares you to encounter Jesus?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 1:19–34. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What does John the Baptist say about Jesus? *John says that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. This means Jesus is the solution to all of our problems.*
- If someone asked you, “Who is Jesus?” what would you say?

**Title:** An Unexpected Journey

**Main Passage:** John 1:35–51

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”*

John 1:43

**Overview:** Do you remember the day you decided to follow Jesus? Do you remember what it was like when you went looking for him, only to find that he had been looking for you? Do you remember the questions that kept you from belief and the moment Jesus answered those questions for you? Do you remember what it felt like when you first said “yes” to the adventure of following Jesus?

In our passage for this week, we see the moments when Jesus’ first followers meet him. In this passage, Jesus gives Simon a new name, celebrates Nathanael as a truth teller, invites Philip to follow, answers Andrew’s question with the invitation to “come and see” and promises that there are greater things yet to come. Needless to say, meeting Jesus was a life-changing moment for these men.

Regardless of where we are in our relationship with Jesus, the promise in this passage is that if we seek him, we will find him. Our unbelief, questions and doubt do not pose a threat to Jesus, nor are they too great of an obstacle to overcome. Jesus is able to meet us like he met his first followers. He is able to reveal himself to us so that our lives becomes alive, hopeful, full of purpose and forever changed. Greater things are yet to come.

**Opening Question**

- What is one of the best adventures you have ever had?

**Discussion Questions**

- Read John 1:35–51. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did Andrew discover about Jesus from his first interaction with him?
- What did Simon discover about Jesus from his first interaction with him?
- What did Philip discover about Jesus from his first interaction with him?
- What did Nathanael discover about Jesus from his first interaction with him?
- What do you learn about Jesus from John 1:35–51?
- In what ways is following Jesus like a great adventure?

### ***Application Questions***

- What was your attitude towards Jesus when you first met him?
- Jesus tells Nathanael that he will see greater things as he follows him. What great things have you seen Jesus do in your life as you have followed him?
- How has your understanding of Jesus deepened since you first met him?
- Jesus took these men on a wild journey that forever changed their lives. What wild journey might Jesus be inviting you to be a part of?

### **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 1:35–51. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What do you think it means to follow Jesus?
- What do these verses tell you about Jesus that invites you to follow him?

**Title:** Transforming Power

**Main Passage:** John 2:1–12

**Secondary Passages:** 2 Corinthians 5:17, Philippians 4:6–7, Psalm 55:1–23

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

1 Peter 5:7

**Overview:** Weddings in Jesus' day were extended community events that often lasted a week or more. Instead of a honeymoon, the bride and groom would host a lavish open house and many people would journey for many days to attend. Needless to say, there was a lot of pressure around weddings in the first century.

In a Jewish wedding, wine was essential, not so that people could get drunk, but because wine was a symbol of God's blessing and the fruitfulness that was in store for the couple. It was such an important symbol that to not have wine or to run out of it was a deep disgrace.

In John 2:1–12 Jesus attends a wedding and the wine runs out. Jesus' mom is convinced her son can do something to help this couple, so she persistently brings the problem to Jesus. As Jesus turns the water into wine, we see a picture of what his ministry is all about. Jesus is about meeting needs, taking away disgrace and transforming broken situations. This, by the way, is what Jesus continues to do today. He is still the God who turns water into wine.

### **Opening Question**

- Think about a memorable wedding you have attended. What made that wedding such a fun time?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read John 2:1–12. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said to Mary that his time had not yet come?
- What might have motivated Jesus to perform this miracle even though his time had not yet come?
- How did Mary demonstrate trust in Jesus?
- What does Jesus' willingness to perform this miracle reveal about his heart?
- How is Jesus' first miracle an example of what's in store for God's people?

### **Application Questions**

- What can you learn from Mary's example as it relates to bringing your problems to Jesus?

- What tends to prevent people from bringing their problems to Jesus?
- What are ways that Jesus has transformed your life or miraculously provided for you?
- What are some problems you need to trust Jesus to transform?

## Table Time With Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 2:1-12. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Does Jesus care about your problems? *Yes.*
- What problems do you need to trust Jesus to transform?



**Title:** Cleansing Power

**Main Passage:** John 2:13–25

**Secondary Passages:** 1 Corinthians 6:12–20, Ephesians 4:17–24

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Ephesians 4:24

**Overview:** The Temple was at the heart of Judaism. It was the center of worship and sacrifice. It was where God's people went to meet with God because it was the place where God promised to live in the midst of his people.

In John 2:13–25 we see that sin, greed and selfishness were being tolerated at the Temple. The Temple had become a place where worship and sacrifice took second place to making a buck. When Jesus saw this, he became angry. The Temple was supposed to be a place of prayer not profit, so Jesus set things straight. He drove out the money-changers, and he spoke of the day when the physical temple would be replaced through his death and resurrection.

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we are now the temple of God. This means we belong to God, God dwells within us and we have been bought with a great price. Therefore we are called to honor God with our bodies.

The work Jesus did to cleanse the Temple in Jerusalem is both a warning and a promise. The warning is that we, too, can tolerate sin, greed and selfishness in our lives, and the promise is that Jesus cares too much about us to allow that to continue. He will bring his cleansing power into our lives because we belong to him.

### **Opening Question**

- How do you feel after you have finished cleaning?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read John 2:13–25. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What do Jesus' words and actions tell us about what the Temple had become?
- What do Jesus' words and actions tell us about his authority over the Temple?
- How might you have responded if you had been worshiping in the Temple that day?
- In what ways is Jesus a far superior temple to the one he condemned in Jerusalem?
- What does John 2:13–25 reveal about Jesus' ability to address sin in our lives?
- Read 1 Corinthians 6:12–20. What stands out to you from these verses?

- What do you think it means to honor God with your body?
- Based on how Jesus cleaned out the Temple in Jerusalem, how do you think he responds when we tolerate sin in our lives?

### ***Application Questions***

- Why do people tolerate sin?
- What sins have you been tempted to tolerate? How has Jesus addressed those areas in your life?
- When Jesus purified the Temple, he didn't leave the people empty-handed. Instead, he gave them something better. He gave them himself. Why is this important to keep in mind when it comes to allowing Jesus to deal with sin in our lives?
- Spend several minutes in prayer asking Jesus to reveal sin that you have been tolerating. Close by asking him to forgive and cleanse you.

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 2:13–25. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Does Jesus care about what you do with your life? *Yes, he wants you to honor him with your life.*
- What should you do when Jesus reveals an area of your life that doesn't honor him? *You should admit your sin and ask him to change you.*

**Title:** Spiritual People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 3:1–21

**Secondary Passage:** Philippians 3:1–16

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

John 3:16 –17

**Overview:** Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and one primary characteristic of the Pharisees was their complete devotion to their spiritual life. They were committed to honoring God. They were serious about prayer, fasting, tithing and staying pure. So they debated, discussed and dissected God’s Law.

The Pharisees were not spiritual dabblers or delinquents. They were the spiritual movers and shakers of the day. They were influential and culturally honored.

Yet, spiritual effort and fervor are no substitute for Jesus because spiritual discipline doesn’t make us right with God. To be right with God, we must be born again, and being born again happens when we believe in Jesus. In other words, spiritual people need Jesus.

**Opening Question**

- Who are some of the spiritual leaders who are socially influential and culturally honored today?

**Discussion Questions**

- Read John 3:1–21. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Based on this passage, how would you describe Nicodemus?
- What does it mean to see *the kingdom of God*?
- Why did Nicodemus find Jesus’ words so difficult to believe?
- What does the metaphor of being born again signify about what happens when we enter a relationship with God?
- According to Jesus, how does someone become born again?
- Jesus came into the world because God loved the world. Why, then, do some people hate him (3:19–21)?
- Why might spiritual people like Nicodemus find Jesus to be offensive?

### **Application Questions**

- If you could have a private meeting with Jesus, what questions would you ask him?
- What spiritual work, other than Jesus', are you tempted to rest in?
- Jesus tells Nicodemus that *God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life*. How have you experienced God's love in your life?
- What does it mean to believe in Jesus?
- What things keep you from understanding and embracing Jesus?
- How has believing in Jesus been like being born again for you?

### **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 3:1–21. What stands out to you from these verses?
- In this passage Nicodemus gets to have a conversation with Jesus. If you could have a conversation with Jesus, what would you talk to him about?
- Jesus tells Nicodemus that *God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life*. How have you experienced God's love in your life?
- What does it mean to believe in Jesus? *Believing in Jesus means that you believe what the Bible says about Jesus is true and you decide to follow him.*

**Title:** Encountering Resurrection

**Main Passage:** John 20

**Secondary Passage:** 1 Corinthians 15:1–11

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

2 Corinthians 5:17

**Overview:** This week we are going to the end of the book of John to focus on the resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus' resurrection has changed and continues to change this world. Jesus is a living Savior who meets us where we are and overcomes our doubts, fears and failures. We see this reality so clearly in John 20. Everyone who meets Jesus is transformed. This week we are going to look at different people who experienced the resurrection of Jesus in order to see how their lives were changed.

**Opening Question**

- How do you feel when something changes for the good?

**Discussion Questions**

- Read John 20. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How does Jesus' resurrection change people in John 20?
- Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–11. What does Paul say about Jesus' resurrection?
- How did Jesus' resurrection change Paul's life?

**Application Questions**

- How has Jesus' resurrection changed your life?
- Is there anything in your life that you would like Jesus to change?
- Is there anything in this world that you would like Jesus to change?

## Table Time With Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 20. What stands out to you from these verses?

- Is Jesus a living Savior? *Yes, Jesus rose from the grave and he is alive today.*
- Does Jesus want to change you? *Yes, Jesus wants to forgive you for your sins and he wants to help you love God and other people.*
- ***Parents, this week share with you children some of the ways that Jesus has changed you.***

**Title:** Healthy People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 3:22–36

**Secondary Passages:** Proverbs 29:23, James 4:6

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*He must increase, but I must decrease.*

John 3:30

**Overview:** : By all accounts, John the Baptist was emotionally healthy. He had a proper understanding of who he was and why his ministry was successful. This led to John the Baptist being well-grounded and humble. His identity wasn't tied to his success, so when his ministry started to be eclipsed by Jesus' ministry, he rejoiced.

From a human point of view, John the Baptist faced a very real temptation to get bitter and angry. After all, he had been at the very peak of popularity. Different kinds of people were coming to him, including those with social and political influence. Some people said he was the fulfillment of God's promises. But now John the Baptist is on the back side of his success. His ministry impact is declining, as Jesus' ministry gains momentum. Yet instead of responding with jealousy, John responds with joy. He is excited about what Jesus is doing.

It is important to notice that John the Baptist was emotionally healthy because his identity was clearly connected to Jesus. John the Baptist saw himself as the friend of the bridegroom, meaning he wasn't the main thing; Jesus was the main thing.

How will we approach our own decline? What will we do when our lives or talents start to be eclipsed? This is such an important question to answer because it is going to happen. From John we learn that emotionally healthy people anchor their identity in Jesus.

### **Opening Question**

- What are different ways people respond to declines in their success, health, effectiveness, etc.?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read John 3:22–36. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What was John the Baptist's response to the news that Jesus' ministry was growing?
- From this text, what revealed that John the Baptist's identity was grounded in Jesus?
- John the Baptist compared himself to the friend of a bridegroom. What does a friend of a bridegroom do and why is this a great metaphor for our relationship with Jesus?

- John the Baptist took every opportunity given to him to exalt Jesus. In verses 31–36, he essentially preaches about Jesus and invites people to follow Jesus. What does this tell you about the character of John the Baptist?

### ***Application Questions***

- Sometimes different churches or Christian groups are jealous of each other's success. What does this passage have to teach us?
- What are different ways that you have responded to declines in your life?
- What attitudes from John the Baptist do you want to imitate?
- What helps you to anchor your identity in Jesus?
- In what ways have you experienced emotional health in Jesus?

### **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 3:22–36. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How did John the Baptist respond when he heard that Jesus was becoming more popular? *He rejoiced.*
- What does John the Baptist's response to the success of Jesus' ministry tell you about his character? *John cared more about Jesus than personal success.*
- What helps you to care more about Jesus than anything else?



**Title:** Hurting People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 4:1–45

**Secondary Passage:** Isaiah 55:1–3

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*

Isaiah 55:1

**Overview:** The woman in John 4 had some strikes against her. Number one, she was a Samaritan, and in those days the Samaritans were considered second-class citizens. Number two, she was a woman living in a culture that didn't value women. Number three, she had made her way through five marriages in a time when one divorce was enough to elicit a lifetime of shame. Finally, when she met Jesus, she was living with a man who wasn't her husband.

Needless to say, the woman at the well had brokenness in her life. And yet Jesus met with her and healed her hurt by satisfying her deepest desires. This story isn't just something that happened in the past; it's something that continues today. Jesus is a living Savior who meets us in our hurt to bring healing.

**Opening Question**

- Talk about a time when you experienced a body of water that was refreshing.

**Discussion Questions**

- Read John 4:1–45. What stands out to you from this passage?
- What in this story would have seemed strange or wrong to people living in Jesus' culture?
- What does Jesus' willingness to interact with the Samaritan woman reveal about his character?
- How might following Jesus require us to behave in ways our culture finds strange?
- What did Jesus mean when he said he could give her living water?
- Why is water a great metaphor for what it is like to know and follow Jesus?
- Why do you think the woman changed the subject once Jesus mentioned her personal life?
- How did Jesus respond when she changed the subject?
- How did the woman respond to her encounter with Jesus?

**Application Questions**

- In what ways do you identify with the woman in this story?

- Talk about a time in your life when you felt hurt or broken by things in your past.
- How do you respond when God wants to address areas of your life that are personal?
- When have you felt that knowing Jesus is deeply satisfying?

The way this passage ends is worth considering. In a matter of hours, this woman's life was changed. Before encountering Jesus she was trapped in immorality and was a social outcast. After encountering Jesus, she became the first to share Jesus with the Samaritan people and many from her town also believed. This was indeed an unexpected transformation.

- How have encounters with Jesus unexpectedly transformed you?

## Table Time With Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 4:1–45. What stands out to you from this passage?
- What did Jesus say to the woman at the well? *Jesus said that he could give her water that would satisfy her.*
- What is water like?
- How is being in a relationship with Jesus like water?

**Title:** Powerful People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 4:46–54

**Secondary Passages:** Psalm 138:1–8, James 4:10

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

James 4:10

**Overview:** The official in John 4:46–54 had a lot going for him. He was in a position of power and prominence. He had servants tending to his needs. He was prosperous and healthy. On the surface, the official didn't seem to have a need for Jesus, but then his son became ill, and he realized he needed help.

At that moment, the official had a real decision to make. He could try to meet his need by harnessing his resources, or he could humbly ask Jesus to work on his behalf. The fact that the official decided to ask Jesus for help reveals his confidence in Jesus. The official knew that there was a limit to what he could do, so he went to the One who could help.

John 4:46–54 is Jesus' first healing miracle in John's gospel, and it reminds us that there will be moments when we come face to face with the reality that our ability is lacking. We need something more than the partial power that we possess. The official in this story shows us the proper response for these moments. We don't rest in our power; instead, we ask Jesus to help, and we rest in what he can do.

### **Opening Question**

- What do people tend to do when they feel powerless?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read John 4:46–54. What stands out to you from these verses?
- From this text, what reveals that the official was a powerful man?
- How is the official an example of the reality that we all face things we are powerless to control?
- Jesus said, *“Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”* What do you think this means and why do you think Jesus said it?
- How did the official respond to Jesus? Why is this response an example of faith?
- Read Psalm 138:1–8 and James 4:10. Based on these verses, how does God want us to respond when we face situations we can't control?

### ***Application Questions***

- How are you tempted to respond when you feel powerless?
- When have you seen Jesus do something for you that you were powerless to do for yourself?
- How has Jesus' work in your life strengthened your faith?
- What helps you remember to trust in Jesus when you feel powerless?
- How do you need God's help in your life today?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 4:46–54. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Will there be moments in your life when you need help? *Yes, there will be many moments when you need help.*
- Why is it hard to ask for help? *Sometimes we don't think we need help, and sometimes we forget that God wants to help us.*
- Did Jesus care about the boy who was sick? *Yes, Jesus cared about him and wanted to heal him.*
- How do you need God's help in your life today?

**Title:** Hopeless People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 5:1–17

**Secondary Passages:** Isaiah 53:4–5, James 5:14–15, Revelation 21:1–4

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.*

Jeremiah 17:14

**Overview:** The paralyzed man in John 5:1–17 faced a hopeless situation. He had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years, and during that time, he had no one to help him get well. One day Jesus met him and asked him the most important question of his life: Do you want to be healed? The paralyzed man’s answer was heartbreaking: I have no one to help me be healed. So Jesus stepped into his hopelessness and made him whole.

Have you ever felt hopeless, broken and stuck? The good news of John 5:1–17 is that Jesus is working to heal what is hopeless.

### Opening Question

- What comes to mind when you think about a hopeless situation?

### Discussion Questions

- Read John 5:1–17. What stands out to you from these verses?
- From this text, what reveals that the paralyzed man was in a hopeless situation?
- Do you ever feel hopeless?
- Why do you think Jesus asked the paralyzed man if he wanted to be healed?
- Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “*Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.*” Why do you think Jesus said this?
- When Jesus says, “*My Father is working until now, and I am working,*” what do you think he means?
- Read Revelation 21:1–4. What will the world be like when Jesus finishes working?
- How does Jesus’ healing at the pool give us a hint of what he wants to do in our lives?
- Read James 5:14–15. What are you supposed to do when you need healing?

- Why do you think God makes the elders of a church a tangible witness to Jesus' ability to heal?<sup>1</sup>

### ***Application Questions***

- When have you faced a hopeless situation?
- How did Jesus work in the midst of your hopelessness?
- How do sins, problems or sicknesses become so integral to our identity that we have trouble letting them go?
- What specific healing are you looking forward to when Jesus finishes his work in this world?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 5:1–17. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How do you think the paralyzed man felt before he met Jesus?
- What did Jesus do in this passage? *Jesus cared about the man and made him whole.*
- Have you ever felt hopeless?
- What does Jesus want you to know when you feel hopeless? *He cares about you and he is working to heal what is hopeless.*

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1 If you would like the elders at Faith to pray for you and to anoint you with oil, please email them at [elders@faithchurchfc.org](mailto:elders@faithchurchfc.org)

**Title:** Judgmental People Need Jesus

**Main Passage:** John 5:18–47

**Secondary Passage:** John 10:22–30

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.*

John 5:20

**Overview:** After healing the paralyzed man, Jesus faced criticism from the religious leaders.<sup>1</sup> They were upset with Jesus because he healed on the Sabbath and commanded the man to carry his mat. Their criticism revealed that they didn't understand who Jesus was or why he had come. So Jesus graciously revealed to them who he was and why he was at work in this world. Sadly, the religious leaders didn't listen to Jesus. Instead, they allowed their criticism to turn to anger, which ultimately led them to crucify Jesus on the cross.

In this passage we learn two very important truths. First, we learn about Jesus' relationship with God the Father. Second, we learn that a judgmental, critical, unteachable, domineering and non-relational spirit can keep us from embracing Jesus.

### Opening Question

- What are a few of your pet peeves?

### Discussion Questions

- Read John 5:18–47. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Why were the religious leaders upset with Jesus?
- What did this reveal about their character?
- How did Jesus respond to the religious leaders?
- What did Jesus reveal about his relationship with God the Father?
- What does it look like to embrace the reality that the Father has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son?
- What kept the religious leaders from believing Jesus?
- What do you think is *the glory that comes from the only God*?

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word *loudaioi* refers specifically here to Jewish religious leaders, and others under their influence, who opposed Jesus in that time. For more information see the footnotes for this passage in the ESV Study Bible.

### **Application Questions**

- Jesus' charge against the religious leaders was that they had been looking at the right book but reading it the wrong way. How might this serve as a warning for us today in our own practice of reading, studying, sharing and teaching the Bible?
- When have you been judgmental, critical, unteachable, domineering and non-relational?
- How does Jesus' relationship with the Father free you from being judgmental, critical, unteachable, domineering and non-relational?
- What does it look like to join Jesus in the work he is doing in this world?
- How has a judgmental spirit kept you from life in Jesus?

### **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 5:18–47. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What kept the religious leaders from following Jesus? *They were upset that he healed a man on the Sabbath.*
- What things keep you from following Jesus?
- What things keep you from loving people as Jesus loves people?
- ***Parents, this week ask God to give your kids a humble and teachable heart.***