

Encountering Jesus

John 4:1-42

Introduction

Life has a way of presenting us with conversations we didn't see coming, conversations that can turn our worlds upside down—in the best sense. I've often been struck by how a chance encounter can leave an indelible mark on our souls. Could it be that these are not mere coincidences, but moments orchestrated by God?

In John Chapter 4, a Samaritan woman finds herself in such an unexpected, life-altering conversation with none other than Jesus Christ. Today, as we open the Scriptures, let's consider what this story teaches us about divine appointments, transformation, and the love of God that seeks us out, even when we least expect it.

Exposition

I. What We Really Need from God (Vv. 1-15)

While we may have no problem requesting what we “want from God,” we might not always realize what we really “need from God.” To drive home this point, Jesus points the Samaritan woman and us to water...

Illustration - 8 Ounces of Water, 8 Times a Day

Just as our bodies need water to survive, our souls need the “living water” of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ to refresh and restore us. We cannot live without his “living water.”

T.S. – But while we know we need water, sometimes we fill our lives with other things...

II. The Sin You Are Most Ashamed Of (Vv. 16-26)

In these verses, Jesus seeks to expose the Samaritan woman’s need and shame to the saving grace of the living water that He offers her.

The sin that you are most ashamed of, most afraid of someone finding out, that you do not want to talk about, that you so desperately want to keep hidden, may very well be the sin that God wants to bring to the surface to use for your deliverance.

Illustration – Chuck Colson

In the heart of the Watergate scandal, Chuck Colson faced immense public shame. But when he encountered the truths in C.S. Lewis' "Mere Christianity," he did something radical: he confessed his shame to God. And in that vulnerability, he found redemption and grace. He transformed his life to launch Prison Fellowship, touching thousands of lives.

Friends, God's grace awaits us, too, but first, we must be willing to expose our shame to Him. In doing so, we're not telling God something He doesn't already know; we're opening ourselves to the transformative power of His love. Your greatest shame could become your greatest ministry.

Objections - The Fear of “Church People” – Don't let other people's misunderstanding of God's salvation in Jesus keep you from experiencing it yourself!

Your need for forgiveness does not deter God's desire for your salvation in Jesus. He calls us to leave our sins behind so that we might be satisfied by God.

T.S. – So, what does the Samaritan woman do?

III. Telling the Story of Our Salvation (Vv. 27-42)

I love how the Samaritan woman responds. The community that likely shamed her becomes her audience. She, who had live so much bad news, becomes the bearer of good news!

Others need to hear of your encounter with Jesus!

Conclusion

In closing, we've journeyed through the narrative of a Samaritan woman who, in the midst of her daily tasks, found herself face to face with the Savior of the world. This was an unexpected meeting, a divine appointment, that changed the course of her life forever. We too are invited to such transformative encounters with Jesus, where we can find the 'living water' that quenches the deepest thirsts of our souls.

Let us not underestimate the power of meeting Jesus in the midst of our ordinary lives. Whether you're here in church, in the workplace, at home—you are not too far from the well where Jesus offers the water of eternal life.

He knows you. He seeks you out. He crosses all boundaries and breaks down all barriers to reach you. Just like the Samaritan woman, you may feel unworthy, you may carry burdens of shame, or perhaps you feel spiritually dry. The good news is that Jesus offers you the same living water, the same promise of transformation, love, and grace.

So my challenge to you this week is simple yet profound: Encounter Jesus for yourself. Open your heart to the possibility that He is closer than you think, waiting to meet you, to refresh you, and to change your life from the inside out.

May we all leave here today with a thirst for that living water, a hunger for that deeper encounter with the One who knows us completely and loves us unconditionally.