

FACE TO FACE

DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

The Samaritan Woman's Story

- Focus** We can lead other people into having a face-to-face encounter with Jesus Christ by telling them our story of how we have encountered Jesus.
- Open** Tell the person sitting to your left something you've learned from them or something you admire about them. If you don't know that person, ask them a question to help you get to know them.
- Read** In John 4, we read the story of the Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus at the well. In this story we learn from Jesus' example how to lead someone to a face-to-face encounter with the Lord.

1. Don't argue.

Our enemy, Satan, tries to draw people into arguments so they won't have an encounter with Jesus. In her conversation with Jesus, the Samaritan woman first wanted to argue about *race*, since Jesus was a Jew and she was a Samaritan (John 4:9). People we witness to may also want to argue that their race is a barrier that keeps them from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. But *every* person is created in the image of God, and every person needs to have an encounter with Jesus.

The Samaritan woman also wanted to *reason* with Jesus (John 4:11). She wanted to know where He would get this living water that He promised. Sometimes when we tell people about Jesus, they want to argue on a rational level, even though we are really addressing a spiritual need. It's OK to admit that we don't know all the answers to their questions. We are qualified to be witnesses because we have had an encounter with Jesus.

Like the Samaritan woman, sometimes people want to argue about *religion*. Religion is a barrier between God and man. We must talk to them about relationship with Jesus Christ.

2. Just talk.

Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink at the well so that He could start a conversation with her (John 4:7). Instead of arguing with people, we need to show interest in their lives and talk to them. We can talk to them about abundant life (John 4:10), eternal life (John 4:13–14), sin (John 4:16–19), relationship with God (John 4:21–24) and Jesus (John 4:25–26). In our conversations, we can tell our story and invite people to meet Jesus, the One who knows us and loves us.

Talk

1. Before you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, did you try to argue about race, reason or religion? Which one(s)? What happened to help you get past your arguments?
2. Do you currently have a friend or family member who argues with you when you try to talk to them about Jesus? Take time as a group to pray for each other and ask God to give you the love and wisdom you need to know how to talk to this person.
3. Why do you think it's difficult for some of us to talk openly about our faith? What "rules" of our culture discourage us from witnessing? What mistakes are we afraid we might make?
4. Pastor Robert mentioned five things to talk about when leading someone to an encounter with the Lord: abundant life, eternal life, sin, relationship with God and Jesus. Which of these are easier for you to talk about? Which ones are harder? How do these topics relate to telling your story?
5. Tell the group the name of one person you are praying for who you want to see become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Pray as a group for the people you each have named.

Live

Ask God to show you some way that you can serve the person you mentioned in question 5 so you can demonstrate the love of Christ in action. Then do whatever the Holy Spirit tells you.

Pray

Thank You, Lord, that You want to have an encounter with every person. We praise You that You are the God who gives abundant, eternal life! Lord, please help us to lead someone to You this year.