

BUCKET LIST: Large Group Series

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Week 1: Encountering God

Exodus 33:18-19, 34:5-7- Moses Encounters God

Main Point: Only an encounter with Jesus can bring true satisfaction to our lives.

INTRO:

- Everybody has dreams.
- Woman Video clip: Pretty Woman "What's Your Dream"
www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GuWouH2RMY
- What's your dream?

A Bucket List is a list of things you would want to do before you kick the bucket.

What are some things on your bucket list? (get answers from the group)

- Graduate, Get the perfect job, Lose weight, Learn another language...
- Priorities- If I was to look at your cell phone, I could probably tell who's pretty important to you by glancing at your text or call list. Similarly, bucket list items can say a lot about our top priorities and what's really most important to us.

Can you imagine encountering the God of the universe—face to face? Don't you think an encounter with that God would be a moment to remember?

Probably the best response I got from students this week was from an atheist student who said, "It would change my life." This is the type of encounter that Moses wanted. In fact, it was the top item on his Bucket List. Let's take a look.

Exodus 33:18-19 (NLT)

Moses responded, "Then show me your glorious presence." The Lord replied, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will call out my name, Yahweh, before you. For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose."

Exodus 34:5-7 (NLT)

Then the LORD came down in a cloud and stood there with him; and he called out his own name, Yahweh. The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin."

Moses wanted an encounter with God and he got it! He asked God to show him his glorious presence. God came down in a cloud and revealed himself to Moses. Yahweh. The LORD. Ok, Number one on Moses Bucket List. Check!

The reason why it was possible for Moses to have an encounter with God is because God longs to reveal himself to us. The God of the universe wants an encounter with us so he can reveal himself.

3 ways God reveals himself to us.

1. God reveals his character to us.

I am the God called Yahweh. I am the LORD. I am the God of compassion. I am the God of mercy. I am the God who is slow to anger. I am the God who is filled with unfailing love. I am the God who is faithful. I am the God who forgives. I am the God who is lavish (wasteful) with my love to a thousand generations. Yahweh is a very personal name for God and God wanted to share it with Moses using it to define his attributes of love, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and faithfulness.

Optional Activity, play the Telephone game (In rows, have them play telephone and share the experience)

What can happen to a personal message over a thousand generations. It will get garbled. Thank God we have recorded scripture that can last through generations.

2. God reveals himself through his immeasurable mercy and compassion.

v 19? "For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose."

God stands out here because his mercy and compassion are endless. Our world doesn't work that way. But God does.

-Mercy is when we get a second chance, even when we don't deserve it.

-Compassion is when we see someone who needs help and we help them.

Woman in scripture who got a second chance, John 8:3-11.

Picture this woman standing there without a friend in sight. Have you ever been in a situation when no one's on your side? Jesus takes a stand for her. Jesus helps. And here is where God reveals himself to us through compassion. Jesus sees this woman who needs help and he helps her.

God reveals himself to us through mercy by giving her a second chance. We need help and God longs to help us like he helped this woman. We need second chances and God is ready to receive repentant hearts that want another shot.

3. God reveals himself in the person of Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate way God chooses to interact with us.

In Matthew 1:23 baby Jesus is called Immanuel, which means, God with us. God interacting with us. What greater way for God to reveal himself to us than to come here in person. In the person of Jesus. To become a man. To walk among us. To walk with us, just like he did in the garden. In Jesus, God came to reveal himself.

Immanuel came to be with us and give us good news. Our God, finding a way to make it all right again. Listen now to this good news:

Optional video: <http://evangelism.intervarsity.org/how/gospel-outline/big-story-tutorial-video>

God created us for good. He looked at us (his creation) and said we were very good. Initially we had a great relationship with God. And why not, God is so loving. Over time, we started to want things that God knew would not be good for us. But we wanted them anyway. So we told God to shove off and we sought after the desires of this world and got into trouble. The world became messed up and our relationships with each other and with God became messed up. Today we see a hurting and dying world in need of a God to reveal himself and save us. And God did just that. He came to us in the person of Jesus and offered us a message of repentance and forgiveness of sins, and an opportunity to trust him again with our whole lives to restore us back to right relationship with him, each other, and the world. But this wasn't done without a cost. Rather than us paying the price for our wrong doing and rebellion, God in the person of Jesus, paid the price and gave his life by dying on a cross for our sins and the sins of the world. And because he's God, three days later, he raised to life, conquering death, and now offers each one of us new life with Jesus as Lord.

What if some items on your bucket list are there because you believe they will bring fulfillment and purpose to your life. Yes, we try them and seem happy for the moment. But we quickly realize that feelings fade and we find ourselves back in the places we were before.

The truth is, only an encounter with Jesus can bring true satisfaction to our lives.

CALL TO FAITH

God revealed his character to us and it is good. He is the God who is slow to anger. He is filled with unfailing love. He is faithful and he forgives. He is the God who is lavishly (wasteful) with his love to a thousand generations. If your heart longs for a God who will love you like no other and wants to be with you through every life adventure, then the invitation is for you to encounter God in prayer tonight.

God revealed his mercy to us. Mercy is when you get a second chance, even if you don't deserve one. If you need a second chance, even if you don't think you deserve it, come have an encounter with God in prayer tonight. There's nothing you've done that is beyond God's forgiveness. Bring your wrongs to him tonight and marinate in his mercy.

God revealed his compassion to us. Compassion is when we see someone who needs help and we want to help them. God wants to help you. Like the woman who was brought before Jesus, He will take our hurts, our loneliness, our feelings of shame, our pride, our low self esteem, our memories and pain of others making fun of us, our lack of acceptance, and he will call us to come to him and receive his compassionate help which is the real source of true joy. If you need help, let Jesus be the one to walk with you in that tonight.

God revealed himself to us through the person of Jesus. He came to be with you. To walk with you. To reveal who he is and what he is like. To love you, to comfort you, to forgive you, to encourage you, to restore you, and to use you to change the world. He gave his life for you to bring you back into right relationship with him. If you want Jesus and all that a life with him offers, then please stand up right now...we would like to lead you in prayer to begin following Jesus right now...now we would like to ask those sitting near you to pray for you to solidify this decision...finally we would like to invite you to come forward to process more with us and let you know what some next steps are...

Week 2: Encountering God in healing

Mark 5:21- The Bleeding Woman

MAIN POINT: Seek Jesus, self-risking trust in the person of Jesus and His power produces far greater and more holistic (whole person) healing than we could ever imagine, more than we even think we need.

INTRO:

- What were you known for in high school that you liked being known for? Have people share in 2's. Speaker tells them a story about that.
- What were you known for or is true of you in high school that you don't wish to be known for or wish was different? Speaker tells a more vulnerable story about something that was true of them that they wish was different in high school.
- We all have different things that make us who we are and what we're known for or is true about us. Some of those things we like, some of those things we don't like, and even others of those things might be things that are true of us but we really wish wasn't. When we have that part of us, there is often something in us that thinks 'things will never be different.'
- Tonight we're going to take a look at a woman who had some things that were true of her that she couldn't change and she thought would never change. She has an encounter with Jesus that forever changes her life.

READ PASSAGE, Mark 5:21-

Show this image of a wooden sculpture of Mary Magdalene by Donatello, this is how I picture the bleeding woman.



The 3 Things Jesus offers us:

1: Jesus has more for us than we can get on our own or do ourselves.

Woman takes a huge risk to see if Jesus has more for her than all the other things she's tried.

- a. The woman's illness was chronic, lost all her money, tried all within her power v.26
- b. She needs physical and ritual healing (Lev. 15:25-30), she was unclean/an outcast, which is why she came up behind him v.27
- c. Just a touch (Acts 19:12) "be healed" same verb in both verses, 23 & 27 meaning to "be saved"

Are we willing to take a big risk to see if Jesus has more for us than we can get on our own?

2: Jesus doesn't want to just 'fix' her, he wants to know her.

- a. When we come to Jesus with the things in our lives that we want to be different, he doesn't just want to help us, but he wants to know us, he wants to walk with us, he wants to be in relationship with us – not just give us a vending machine solution.
- b. Close your eyes and think about the friends in your life. Picture them in your mind. Now think about a friend that only calls you when they need something. Can all of you picture a friend of yours who does that to you? How does it make you feel when your friend does this? You probably start ignoring their phone calls, you get angry, you get bitter, you wonder if there is something wrong with you and why they don't just want to spend time with you.

Open your eyes. If you only come to Jesus with your problems and never just to spend time with him, you are being that friend. What's cool about Jesus is that he never gets bitter or angry or mad, he never ignores your phone calls. He is always there, he just wants to spend time with you, he wants to know you, to really know you.
- c. What's 1 thing you are going to do this week to let Jesus know you and to know more of him? Share it in pairs with the person sitting next to you.

3: Jesus wants complete healing in our lives, not just partial healing.

- a. The woman thought she was healed and tried to sneak away, but Jesus invites her to come and tell the whole truth.
- b. Jesus thinks more about the whole person, he wants her to be reintroduced into society as a whole person and not as she once was. (Lev. 15)
- c. Jesus declares – you have been made well (a more full type of healing, "be saved"). Jesus brings spiritual healing along with the physical, and adoption into his family. He knows her real problem is not the bleeding, but the condition of her soul, that she needs a savior and a relationship with creator God.

RESPONSE:

- Where are the areas in your life that you'd be willing to risk to see if Jesus could offer you far more than you ever thought possible? Where might you want healing?

- What are the ways you want to take a step into not just getting what God 'can give you' but into having a relationship with the God of the Universe that loves you and wants you to know He knows you deeply and loves you?

CALL TO FAITH:

Jesus is inviting you into this kind of relationship right now. He is inviting you to come and be made well. And his healing is not just physical, but it starts with the spiritual. We are broken and we need a savior. Jesus is asking you to turn from your old way of fixing yourself and turn to follow him right now. Say yes to Jesus and begin that journey with God.

If you have never said yes to Jesus before, and would like to do that right now, we are inviting you to stand up...we would like to lead you in prayer to begin following Jesus right now...now we would like to ask those sitting near you to pray for you to solidify this decision...finally we would like to invite you to come forward to process more with us and let you know what some next steps are...

WEEK 3: Encountering God in Mission

Mark 6:30-44, Jesus Feeding the 5,000

MAIN POINT: Big things happen when we partner with Jesus.

INTRO:

What's the most ridiculous thing you've done so far in college? If I've seen anything throughout my time in college it's that we're pretty indiscriminate in our priorities...

STORY (short) to build trust/get a laugh, i.e.:

One of the stories that stands out for me is from finals my freshmen year. Instead of sleeping well, studying and eating right, a group from my dorm decided we would do something more fun for finals- so right in the middle of finals week, we decided to go to the beach & build a sand castle... at 3am... we didn't time it quite right though & ended up dropping off one of the people at their final on the way back! They had only slept like 2 hours in the car.

Honestly, my freshmen year was more about video games, road trips, intramurals & scoping out girls than anything else! Most of the time we let inconsequential things take the place of real purpose.

What if Jesus had something significant for you to do in college- something more than sand castles?

- What if you didn't have to wait until you graduate to do something meaningful?

Tonight we're going to take a look at every college student's favorite miracle- when Jesus gave away free food.

1. THE NEED:

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. ³¹Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." ³²So they went away by themselves in boat to a solitary place. ³³But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

This story happens after Jesus has been around a bit- he's been getting more & more popular, and now even his disciples are getting recognition. Jesus has sent them out to teach, heal & tell people about him. They're excited, but they're way tired & ready for a rest.

There are lots of things that vie for your attention & effort in college

- Maybe it's the crowd (friendships, relationships, recognition), the business, or the FOMO (fear of missing out) that drives you
- Maybe you're a Christian & you feel like you're doing fine- God has a mostly dedicated part of most Sundays! What more could he want.

As Christians, we feel like what we have is enough

- The disciples have done a lot already; they were tired (they couldn't even eat!)
 - o Can't Jesus see they had other things to do, like rest & do homework?
 - o College is a land of infinite possibilities & infinite distractions
 - It can be hard to sort the great stuff out of all the good, bad & ugly

Jesus sees their needs & development, but he also sees the crowd

- When Jesus looks at the crowd he doesn't see an interruption, he sees people in need

- Background 400 years of silence from God- Jesus is bringing a message of hope & life
- Do we notice the crowds of people that are in need around us?
 - Spiritual silence on campus –people are waiting for the message you have (loneliness, depression, aimlessness, etc.)
 - The crowd show up because they recognized Jesus’ followers- once they got there, they met Jesus
- Even though they wanted to rest & take a break, compassion required that Jesus respond
 - Compassion comes from awareness of need & a knowledge that we can do something about it
 - You probably worked hard to get here. You might just want to kick back & enjoy the ride of the college life- maybe even make a sand castle or two
 - Jesus has an invitation to something way better than that
 - Are we willing to let Jesus change our plans?

2. OUR RESOURCES:

³⁵ By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. ³⁶ Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” ³⁷ But he answered, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” ³⁸ “How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”

When they’re ready to check out, Jesus puts them in charge

- They were more focused on their needs than God’s purposes
 - Jesus saw all the needs of the people, the disciples seemed focused on the physical
 - “Um Jesus- they should eat... also, can you make them leave so we can sleep?”
- They already know they can’t do what he’s asking of them
 - Jesus gives them a huge task & then asks them to see what they’ve got
 - We’ll need \$20,000! Ok, count what you have- Jesus... we have \$15... ok, I can work with that!

Video clip- The Hobbit, Dwarves and Elves Battle of the Five Armies, on their own they are just a few, but joining together, it turns into victory <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMLcd-zobJ0>

3. THE RESULT:

³⁹ Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴ The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

Big things happen when we partner with Jesus

- A ton of people get their needs met
 - Jesus can use us to meet the physical, emotional & spiritual needs of our campus & world
 - How different would your college career look if God used it to change the lives of those around you?
- We get to see more of God
 - They never would have seen this miracle if they weren’t choosing in

- They saw what the crowd missed out on- serving gave them access & insight
- We get real satisfaction (not just a full stomach)
 - We were designed to live lives with God & others at the center
 - When we give our lives up to do that, we get real life in return

We can spend our lives & our time in college distracted by the meaningless stuff, or we can be part of something great

- It would have been a huge shame if the most significant thing I did in college was build sand castles
 - There's not much of a legacy when the waves literally wash it away the next day!
- I got to see lives changed, the campus renewed & world changers developed

CALL TO FAITH:

He wants to use us to accomplish his purposes (he assigns us each a part to play)

Jesus has an invitation for you today

- a. Jesus also wants to satisfy each of us fully & completely
 - i. He sees all of our deepest needs as well, and he has compassion on every one of us
 - ii. Jesus wants to offer a life of much greater freedom, purpose & satisfaction than we can find anywhere else- what stops you from responding to His invitation today?

If you have never said yes to Jesus before, and would like to do that right now, we are inviting you to stand up...we would like to lead you in prayer to begin following Jesus right now...now we would like to ask those sitting near you to pray for you to solidify this decision...finally we would like to invite you to come forward to process more with us and let you know what some next steps are...

- b. Once Jesus does call you to follow, he doesn't just ask you to fill a seat for the rest of your lives
 - i. What part might God be calling you to play? (insert missional call here: apprentice, proxe, free lunch campaign, leadership, GIG etc.) How might he want to change your vision for college?