

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Close Encounters - Part 1

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Introduction

At times it may feel like we are living on cruise-control and just going through the motions. Finish school? Check. Find a job? Check. Earn money? Check. Start a family? Check. Drive within the speed limit? Check? But the life that God has for us is far more than that. Jesus came so that we may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10b). Life is better with Jesus, and it begins when we first encounter Him.

Read: John 3:1-8

Discuss:

1. If you were to excel and top the ranks in your field (or any field), would it change the way you see life? Why or why not?
2. In our reading, who is Nicodemus? What sort of authority or position does he have within the Jewish society? Why did he step out of his way to meet Jesus?
3. Pastor Mark says that although Nicodemus was a religious and prestigious man, he was empty. How was that possible? How much did Nicodemus know about Jesus (John 3:2)?
4. What is your understanding of "an encounter with Jesus"? Have you seen someone who has been transformed by their encounter with Jesus? What did or didn't you notice? If you have experienced it yourself, share your own Spirit-led transformation.
5. Pastor Mark teaches that when we step out of our way to meet Jesus, we need to be ready to leave our past life and values. Why? What are some of the things that are difficult for you to let go?

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6. As Jesus' followers, we are not to live just to 'tick the boxes'. What are some areas in your life right now that feel like boxes to be ticked? What can you do differently?

Respond

Following Jesus is not about being religious. It is not about simply obeying rules to attain a certain rank. Those things will not bring us to the Kingdom of God. It is about being born again in Spirit - accepting Jesus as your personal Saviour, living a Spirit-filled life.

Have you invited Jesus to come into your life? If you haven't, your Life Group leader can pray with you, or you can talk to one of our pastors about your desire to accept Jesus. If you have accepted Jesus, how can you live a Spirit-filled life this week?