

The 11th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, August 4, 2024

“Close Encounters with Jesus: Our Missing Piece”

John 4:5-30

When people have a close encounter with Jesus, their lives are dramatically _____–they’re never the same again.

Christianity is all about _____–a relationship that has the power to change, transform, and make new. And so, we all need a _____ encounter with Jesus–whether we’ve known Him our entire life, are new to faith, or hold Him at a distance.

We were created with a God-shaped _____ within us that only God can fill.

“You have made us to be with you O God, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.” ~St. Augustine

For some people this restless heart syndrome lasts a lifetime, as they continually seek to fill the God-shaped hole with other things–counterfeit _____–that may bring _____ joy and satisfaction, but ultimately leaves them more frustrated and _____ than they were before.

THE 7 P’S OF COUNTERFEIT AFFECTION

- #1. _____ “X will make me feel better.”
- #2. _____ “I’ll find pleasure and rest in worldly gain.”
- #3. _____ “My worth is found in what people think of me.”
- #4. _____ “If only I can do more...”
- #5. _____ “He/she will make me happy.”
- #6. _____ “The grass is always greener...”
- #7. _____ “I’m the boss and it’s all about me.”

Not all of these things are wrong in and of themselves. The problem comes when we _____ on them or even become addicted to them as our only source of _____, happiness, and peace.

The search doesn’t have to be as long and _____ as we make it. In fact, we needn’t look any further than _____ because a real and personal relationship with Him is the only thing that can fill that God-shaped hole within us and the only thing that can satisfy our deepest longings. In other words, Jesus is our _____!

3 GRACE FACTORS CRUCIAL TO TRANSFORMATION

Grace Factor #1: _____.

This woman had been through a lot in her life and, as a result, she had loads of _____ and little self _____.

If Jesus asks us to give Him something, what He really has in mind is to give us something _____ in exchange.

What’s important in this exchange is that Jesus _____ the woman as she was. He noticed her and had _____ for her. He found common ground with her. He invested _____ in her. And He showed a genuine interest in her well-being. And this acceptance was the basis of her _____.

We all need this same kind of _____ love and acceptance before we can even begin to hear the _____ about ourselves. Yet, so often love and acceptance are _____ on what we do and don’t do–on whether we get it _____ or not.

It’s impossible to reach out to people and reject or _____ them at the same time.

How accepted do you feel? How loved?

Is that love and acceptance conditional or unconditional?

Grace Factor #2: _____.

Conviction is the ability to look _____ at one’s own life with a desire to _____.

Conviction is a _____ from God–it’s a feeling that something isn’t right and God wants to go in and do a little _____ heart surgery.

Jesus doesn’t bring this up to _____, belittle, humiliate, or even judge the woman. He brings it up to awaken a _____ in her heart–to convict her to see that something had to change–that there’s a better way.

Her life was nothing more than _____—acting out her pain through inappropriate behaviour that gave slight, _____ relief, but ultimately left her feeling even more empty and ashamed than before.

She was trapped in a life she couldn't get out of—a _____ of sadness and defeat, guilt and shame. She needed a reality check—she needed to stop living in _____ and face the truth. Her life, as she was living it, wasn't _____—something had to change.

It's so easy to _____ or get all religious and focus on the external things of church, instead of on Jesus—especially when He calls us to delve deeper into our hearts, face the _____ about ourselves, and receive the new and better way He offers us.

Jesus cuts through her religious language and tells her that God seeks _____, not _____.

Inner _____ of the things that are out of line in one's life with the _____ is an essential part of transformation. Without conviction, there can be no true _____. And without a sincere turning from the old life to the new, there can be no real _____ of the heart.

Conviction and transformation go hand and hand, and we encounter both when we encounter Jesus.

**How might God be convicting you?
What's stirring in your heart?**

Grace Factor #3: _____.

This was an _____ encounter for the woman. Not only did she get a revealing look at herself and her need for _____, but woven throughout this encounter was a _____ revelation of who Jesus was.

When He initiates conversation, she begins to realize that the common _____ aren't there, and that there's something different about Him. After Jesus tells her things about her life that even she didn't know, she realizes that there's something really _____ about this guy. However, by the end of their conversation, she wonders if Jesus might just be the _____.

We think we know what God is like and what _____ is all about. But in reality, we have a very limited _____.

However, if we really knew God's _____ for us, if we really understood Him—who He is and the _____ He wants to give us—we'd ask for it instead of _____ for some much less.

“You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.” (Matthew 7:9-11)

**What have you wanted to ask of God, but haven't out of fear?
What have you been working so hard to do for yourself, instead of asking for God's help?**



Are you _____? Then come to the well—come to Jesus and receive the _____ that He offers and the grace that only He can supply. Come to Jesus and find your missing piece. God is no _____ of persons—transformation and new life is available for _____—no matter who you are or what you've done.

“I've found my missin' piece, I've found my missin' piece. So grease my knees and fleece my bees I've found my missing peace.”

Will you come to Jesus?

Notes: