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A Personal Experience

*A 13 week journey looking at how a personal experience with Jesus
can change your life and your world.*

This study is the result of our revival weekend
at
Latrobe First Church of God on May 3-5, 2019.

The title is from an amazing Dana Fields song
called, A Personal Experience,
which she sang at one of the services
(check it out wherever you stream or purchase music).

I hope and pray that as you work through this
study, you will be blessed, encouraged, and
challenged as you meet the many people in the
New Testament who had personal experiences
with Jesus.

In the process, I pray that you too will have a
personal experience with Jesus that changes
your life and your world.

*-Pastor Mike Bobula
May 16, 2019*

Week 1: Mary

Luke 1:26-38; 46-55; 2:41-52; Mark 3:31-35; Matt 2:11; John 2:3-5; 19:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

1. How does finding favor with God complicate Mary's life?

Luke 1:46-55

2. What kind of expectations do you think Mary had for her son as she thought about how life was going to turn out?

Matthew 2:11

3. How is Mary's life already changing?

4. In addition to the normal parenting challenges, especially in 1st century Israel, what added emotions and challenges would Mary have faced while raising the Savior of the world?

Luke 2:41-52

5. Mary was a real mom. Joseph was a real dad. Based on your experience as a parent or rebellious child, how do you think this passage would have played out in "real life"?

6. How could they not notice their son was missing. . . For days?

John 2:3-5

7. Describe the relationship Jesus had with His mother at this point.

Mark 3:31-35

8. What do you think was going through Mary's mind this day?

John 19:25-27

9. Describe the emotions Mary must have had.

10. Think back to when Mary first found favor with God. How would her faith have been strengthened, and later challenged, as she watched Jesus grow up?

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Week 2: John the Baptist

Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34; Luke 7:18-23

Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32-34

1. What do these passage all have in common?

Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11

2. Why is it important that Jesus is the one who came looking for John?

3. How would the Spirit of God descending have affected John? You?

Luke 3:21-22

4. What do you think Luke intended by adding the detail about “all the people were baptized?”

John 1:29-34

5. What do you think John’s expectations of Jesus were at this point?

Luke 7:18-23

6. What can we learn about expectation from John in this passage?

7. Compare Jesus’s reply to *Luke 4:16-21*. What did Jesus leave out? Why do you think He did that?

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Week 3: Woman at well

John 4:1-42

John 4:1-6

1. Why do you think Jesus went through Samaria?

John 4:7-15

2. How did Jesus immediately set a new tone in this woman's life?

3. What was going through her mind?

John 4:16-26

4. Describe in your own words what was happening here.

5. How did a conversation about water turn into a discussion on true worship?

John 4:27-42

6. Discuss the different reactions to this encounter: woman, disciples, town, etc.

7. How does the harvest teaching fit with the woman and the town people compared to the disciples? (Hint: they both went to the same town. . .)

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Week 4: Bleeding woman

Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:41-56

This is kind of a 2 for 1 story. The interwoven story line is important.

Mark 5:22-43 Luke 8:41-56. (Matthew 9:18-26 is a parallel account)

1. Where was Jesus going in this scene?

2. What emotions would Jairus have been experiencing? What expectations?

3. Why is it important to include the story of Jairus with the bleeding woman?

Look closely at *Luke 8:43-44; 47*

4. Discuss the depth of her despair.

5. What would her life have been like before and after she met Jesus?

Look closely at *Luke 8:48-56*

6. Discuss the details and why each is so important to the story.

7. How were the experiences of Jairus and the bleeding woman similar? Different?

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Week 5: Woman caught in adultery

John 8:2-11

1. Does it matter to you that this passage was not in the earliest manuscripts?

John 8:2-6

2. How does this scene unfold in ways that are fair and unfair?

John 8:7-8

3. How does Jesus's answer touch an unexpected nerve of the Pharisees?

4. How does His answer affect the crowd and their stones?

5. How does His answer affect The woman? Discuss what the scene must have been like and the range of emotions she felt. (Why she committed adultery? Where was the man? Etc.)

6. What does this kind of personal experience say about Jesus?

7. About those we meet?

8. About us?

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Week 6: Blind man

John 9:1-41

John 9:1-5

1. Why is verse 1 so important?

2. What do the disciples (who have been with Jesus for a while) draw on for their question? (See Ex 20:5, Numbers 14:18)

3. If you think the blind man heard this conversation what do you think was going through his mind?

Look closely at John 9:8-12

4. How was his life changing?

John 9:13-23

5. What was the focus of the Pharisees and the focus of the people?

John 9:24-34

6. How has the man's experience with Jesus changed the direction of his life?

John 9:35-41

7. How does the blind man's experience with Jesus draw him closer to Jesus?

8. How does it affect those around him?

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Week 7: Peter

Matt 4:18-20; Luke 5:1-11; Matt 14:22-33; Matt 16:13-23; Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19

This week we take a broad look at how Peter's experience with Jesus unfolded and developed over time - the ups and the downs, the highs and the lows.

Luke 5:1-11 (Matt 4:18-20 parallel)

1. How did Jesus first approach Peter (Simon)?

2. What details jump out at you?

Matthew 14:22-33

3. Why do you think Peter got out of the boat? What was he looking for?

4. How did this experience affect/change Peter and the others with him?

Matthew 16:13-23

5. What did Peter do right? What did he do wrong?

6. Describe the highs and lows of this encounter with Jesus.

Luke 22:54-62

7. How could Peter have fallen to this point of denial so quickly?

8. Describe the scene and how you think you would have reacted.

John 21:15-19

9. If you had been Peter, what would your expectations be for the first meeting with Jesus after you had denied him 3 times?

10. Why do you think Jesus asked Peter the same basic question 3 times?

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Week 8: Man by pool

John 5:1-18

John 5:1-8

1. Describe and discuss the scene at the pool.

2. Once again, Jesus initiates the contact with people. Why do you think Jesus asked the man such an odd question?

3. How does a personal experience with Jesus depend on you? Jesus?

4. How did Jesus change the man's plan after 38 years of doing the same thing?

John 5:10-14

5. How are verses 10-14 similar to the woman in John 8:2-11(week 5) and the blind man in John 9:1-41 (week 6) ?

John 5:15-18

6. Why do you think the personal experience causes such trouble and upsets the Pharisees so much?

7. What can we learn about a personal experience with Jesus from this passage today?

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Week 9: Herod

Luke 23:6-12

Luke 23:6-9

1. What was Herod's expectation when he met Jesus? (*See also Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-16*)

2. How is that similar to people's expectations today?

Luke 23:10-11

3. Discuss the connection between our motivations & expectations, and the response (or lack thereof) from Jesus. (*See also Matthew 12:38-42*)

Luke 23:12

4. Why do you think Herod and Pilate became friends?

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Week 10: Pontius Pilate

Matt 27:11-14; Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:1-5; 13-25; John 18:33-19:16

Matthew 27:11-14 (Mark 15:2-5 parallel)

1. Describe what you think the scene looked like. (Where was the crowd? Jewish leaders? Jesus in relation to Pilate)

2. Why do you think the governor was greatly amazed?

Luke 23:1-5; 13-25; John 18:33-40

3. How serious do you think Pilate was in finding out who Jesus was? (*See also John 18:28-32 for background and atmosphere*)

4. What role did the crowd play in Pilate's experience with Jesus? What role does the crowd / society / media play in your experience with Jesus today?

John 19:1-6

5. Why do you think Pilate had Jesus flogged and treated poorly even though he found no guilt in him?

John 19:7-16

6. What are the consequences of passing the buck and responsibility for Jesus over to the Jewish leaders (*see also Matthew 27:24-26*)?

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Week 11: Thief on the cross

Luke 23:32-43; Matthew 27:37-44

Matthew 27:37-44

1. What were the circumstances under which the 2 criminals met Jesus?
2. Describe the scene. Distractions. Possible motivations.

Luke 23:32-38

3. What would have been going through the criminal's minds as they watched this scene unfold?

Luke 23:39-43

4. What would cause such different reactions and experiences under basically the same circumstances for these 2 criminals?

5. How do you react or respond to Jesus when you know you are guilty and deserve punishment or even death?

6. How do you respond when Jesus doesn't react as quickly or in ways that you would expect?

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Week 12: Men on Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35; 36-53

Luke 24:13

1. What “very day” is it? What emotions would be present?

Luke 24:14-24

2. Describe this scene in your own words. Notice how open and honest and raw the emotions are from Cleopas and the other man.

Luke 24:25-29

3. How does Jesus answer their questions?

4. How would the answer “was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer. . .” affect you?

5. How is this similar to “everything has a reason.” Or “it must be God’s will”?

Luke 24:30

6. What is it about the bread that caused them to recognize Jesus?

7. How can this pattern repeat itself today?

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Week 13: Saul/Paul

Acts 7:58 - 8:3; 9:1-22

Acts 7:58 - 8:3

1. What do we learn about Saul and his experience with Jesus in this introduction?

Acts 9:1-2

2. How was Saul's relationship with God - from Saul's perspective?

Acts 9:3-9

3. Describe the scene when Saul first met Jesus personally.

Acts 9:10-19

4. How do you think Saul's understanding of Jesus changed?

Acts 9:20-22

5. What do you think it would take you to be transformed so completely?

6. What do you think it would take for those you know to change their view of Jesus so radically and completely?

7. What role do you have in introducing people to Jesus - the Jesus with whom you have had a personal experience that has changed your life?

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CONCLUDING PASSAGES:

Read Colossians 3:1-17; & 1 Peter 2:1-5