

CONFUSION

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- If you had to describe yourself in just three words which words would you choose?
- What's one thing you're afraid of?
- Who have you encouraged this week?

DISCUSS

This week's discussion focuses on what it means to be truly born again. Ask someone to read John 3: 3-21 out loud. Ask a volunteer to re-tell the story in their own words. Is everyone happy with their summary? Would anyone like to add anything?

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you from this story?
- In what ways do you relate to Nicodemus in this story?
- Does it surprise you that someone can know so much about the bible and not be going to heaven? Why/why not?
- According to these verses – what must a person do to get into the kingdom of God/to get in to heaven? (Verses 5 and 16)
- Why do you think Jesus uses the words 'born again'? In what ways is a spiritual birth similar/different to a physical birth?
- Ask someone to re-read verse 17. What is this verse saying? (If it's helpful, share with them the paraphrase from The Message:

"God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again".

Does this verse match up with how you see God? Why/why not?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

In addition to the above questions, ask your group the following:

- Is there anything in this story that surprises you?
- Ask a volunteer to read verse 20-21 again. How do you personally relate to what is said in these verses?
- Do you think Nicodemus felt frustrated or relieved when he realised that all he had to do was put his faith in Jesus?
- A re-birth is the beginning of new life, a new nature with new principles and aims. What changed in your life when you were born again?
- In verses 14-15 Jesus refers to Moses lifting up a snake in the wilderness. See this story in Numbers 21:4-9. Why do you think Jesus makes this reference?



ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS

life.

CONFUSION

INVOLVE

Ask each member of your group if they believe they have been born again.

If anyone would like to make a first time decision, or recommitment you might to lead them in the following prayer (see attachment).

As a group, pray for anyone who has just made a salvation decision. You might like to stand and lay hands on them as you pray

APPLY

Ask every person to choose one person outside of the group who they will share the gospel with this week. You might like to encourage everyone to text reminders to each other during the week.

LEADER'S NOTES

- Numbers 21:4-9. Our sin ends up being like the sting of a serpent - it has devastating affects and consequences. The powerful remedy in Numbers is a serpent raised up on a stick. The powerful remedy for our sin is Jesus, who was raised up on the cross. He is the cure.
- This series is based in the Gospel of John. Encourage your group to read the book of John while the series is progressing. We recommend challenging your group to read 3 chapters a day. That way they can complete the whole gospel in a week, and could read the entire gospel 5-10 times during the series.
- This is a great time to check that all of your group members own a bible that they can understand!
- If anyone in your group made a first time decision or re-commitment, be sure to follow up with them in the week that follows. As well as sending them a text or card, arrange to catch up with them and talk to them more about their decision.

COMMITMENT PRAYER

Lord God, I believe in you. I believe that Jesus Christ is your son, who you sent into the world so that we could be saved.

I admit that I've been living in darkness and that I have sinned. I am sorry and today I want to choose to live differently, to be led by the Holy Spirit. I accept your forgiveness. I understand that Jesus died to take the punishment for my sin, so that I didn't have to.

Thank you God for your amazing love. Today, I ask you to take control of my life. I want to receive your Holy Spirit and be led by you.

Amen.



SCANDAL

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- Have everyone name one friend and share how the group can pray for them.
- What's something you're trying to get better at at the moment?
- What's the time this week that you've felt the most relaxed?
- How are you going with reading from the book of John each day? What has stood out to you so far?

INVOLVE

Share with your group the importance of caring for and pastoring other people in the church. As a group, make a list of people from your church community who have either become disconnected or who you haven't seen for a while.

Either SMS them on the spot, or have your group commit to making contact with a few people on the list during the week. Have an accountability plan for the next time you meet!

DISCUSS

The woman at the well – John 4.

Often when we read or hear about the Woman At The Well we put ourselves in the place of Jesus and are encouraged to think about how we treat people who are outcasts or on the fringe of society.

But perhaps less often we put ourselves in the place of the woman. "I'm not an outcast, or a horrible sinner," we might say silently to ourselves, "so I can't really relate to her".

Ultimately, though, she was just a woman going about her everyday business. She was a normal person occupied with a mundane chore. And in the midst of her routine, the supernatural God reveals himself! And this unremarkable woman realises first-hand that God is close enough to know every detail of her life – and that he accepts her just as she is, regardless of her personal or cultural issues.

What a powerful encounter!



ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS



SCANDAL

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

Start off by asking your group to read John 4:1-42 out loud.

Have your group focus on verses 5-9. Make sure they understand how weird this encounter was –firstly because Jews made a habit of ignoring Samaritans, and secondly because men made a habit of ignoring women.

Ask your group to transfer the story into a modern context. Who would play the part of Jesus? Who would play the part of the woman? Where would the meeting take place? Your group might transfer the story to their school, or within their community, or something completely different. Hopefully this process helps your group get more engaged in the following discussion questions!

- Imagine you were in the role of the woman (the submissive culture). How would you feel when you were spoken to? What emotion, or range of emotions, would you experience?
- Check out verses 16 and 17. Some random person you've never met knows really personal stuff about you, and it's NOT because of Facebook stalking. What are you feeling at this moment? What thoughts are running through your head?
- By the time v28 comes around, something in the woman has changed – there's genuine excitement about her encounter with the stranger, and she runs off to spread the news. Do you feel the same way about your own faith? What has happened for the woman to get her to that place?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

Have your group read John 4:1-42. In addition to the previous questions, you may want to use the following questions to spark discussion:

- What stands out to you most from this story? What do you think God is showing you through it?
- The woman's encounter with Jesus begins as an interruption or an inconvenience. How do you deal with interruptions in your own life? Are you able to respond with grace and patience?
- Do you think Jesus was waiting for the woman? Why/why not?
- Focus on v16-18. We know on an intellectual level that God knows everything about us, but imagine for a second that you're actually speaking face-to-face and he's referencing some of the stuff you've done that you're not entirely proud of. How would you react?



SCANDAL

APPLY

The woman at the well was so profoundly impacted by her encounter with Jesus that she couldn't contain it – she ran off into town and shared her experience with everyone she met.

This week, challenge your group to pray every day that they would for a fresh sense of excitement and enthusiasm about their own encounter with Jesus.

LEADER'S NOTES

- Remind your group to keep reading through the book of John.
- We recommend that you contact your group members individually to ask them how they're progressing with their bible reading. Send them a text or Facebook message, or - even better, phone them or catch up with them one on one.



GRACE

This week you will need paper and a pen for every person.

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group interacting with each other:

- What's one song that describes or matches your mood at the moment?
- What's one thing you like and one thing you dislike about this time of year?
- What's something that you did recently to serve someone else?

DISCUSS

Today's discussion looks at how people respond to our failures and mistakes. We'll consider how the world makes us feel when we mess up and contrast that with how Jesus responds.

Start the discussion by asking the group the following questions:

- How would you describe the feeling of 'shame' or 'guilt' to someone who has never experienced that feeling?
- Can you tell us about a time when you felt like people were looking down on you because of something you did that they think is bad?

Read John 8:1-11

Ask a volunteer from the group to summarise what happens in these verses in their own words. Does everyone else in the group agree with the summary? Would anyone like to add to it?

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- In the story the woman is humiliated – she is dragged out in front of all of the people and they are all told what she has done wrong. What do you think would be the modern day equivalent of this? (E.g. you're dragged out in front of your whole school assembly and they're all told that you had an affair with a married person).
- How would you feel if you were in that woman's shoes?
- Do you think people in your youth group ever judge people because of their mistakes or impure choices?
- Why do you think people judge other people?
- Do you relate more to the Pharisees (judging people) or the woman (getting judged)? Why?
- Read verse 7 again. Jesus tells the people that they should go ahead and judge the woman (stone her) only if they have never sinned themselves. What happened next? What did Jesus show by asking this?
- Read Luke 6:41-42. What do you think Jesus is saying here?



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life.

GRACE

- Ask for volunteer to read verses 10 and 11 out loud, slowly. What does this tell us about how Jesus reacts to our sin?
- Read John 3:17. How does it feel to know that this is how God treats us?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

In addition to the questions above, you might like to ask:

- Ask someone to read Matthew 7:1-5. Do these verses challenge the way you currently behave? Why?
- How do you think the woman caught in adultery would have described Jesus after this took place? Would you say this how most people see Jesus? Is this how you think of Jesus?

INVOLVE

This week we are going to spend some time praying together. Ask every group member to write the following on a piece of paper:

A – Adoration
C – Confession
T – Thanksgiving
S – Supplication

Explain to the group that each of these represents a type of prayer, and define each term for your group. (Supplication = Asking for things).

Then ask each person to write down a one sentence prayer for each letter, paying particular attention to what they have talked about in life group this week.

Finish with an open time of prayer, where people can read off what they have written down.

APPLY

What one thing will you do this week based on what we have read?

Examples:

- Apologise to someone who you have judged or disrespected
- Spend time thanking God for his grace and forgiveness
- Memorise Scripture that reminds us of God's amazing forgiveness

LEADER'S NOTES

Don't forget to ask everyone how they're going with their bible reading. Let them know that we will be looking at John 9 at life group next week, so that they can read the story in preparation if they're keen.



SIGHT

This week you will need:

- A printed copy of the handout
- Scissors

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- Which reality TV show would you most like to appear on? Why?
- What's the best thing that has happened for you this year so far?
- What is one thing you have read in the book of John so far that has helped or impacted you?

DISCUSS

Today's discussion focuses on Jesus' ability to bring sight. In this story he heals physical blindness and spiritual blindness. Ask a volunteer from your group to read John 9:1-41.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

Start the discussion by asking:

- Ask for a volunteer to retell these verses in their own words. Does everyone else agree with this summary? Does anyone want to add anything?
- In verse 6 Jesus declares that he is the light of the world. What do you think he means?
- Do you think the world is still in darkness? Why?
- Ask someone to read verse 3 out loud. When you face difficult times do you tend to spend much time asking about why it is happening? According to what Jesus says here, what kind of attitude should we have when we face hard trials?
- Do you think it is always our own sin that causes us to suffer in life? What can we learn from Jesus' words in verse 3?
- Imagine you are the man who was born blind. Describe how you think it would feel to look and see for the very first time?
- Are you surprised that the man who was born blind tells the people the truth about what Jesus did, even though he knows they don't want to hear it? Do you ever hold back from testifying about Jesus because you think people will hate you for it?
- This passage talks about Jesus bringing physical sight AND spiritual sight. Can anyone share about what it was like when Jesus gave them spiritual sight for the first time – what do they see differently now?



ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS



SIGHT

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What do you think is the main message in these verses? Does everyone else agree?
- In verse 5 Jesus says that he is the Light of the world. In what ways is the world in darkness?
- What do you think Jesus is referring to in verse 4 when he says: “we must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming and then no one can work”? What do these words mean for you today?
- After the man who was born blind is healed by Jesus he is convinced that he must be a prophet (verse 17) and is determined to follow him (verse 17 and 36). Have you ever experienced such a powerful sign that Jesus is at work that you couldn’t help but believe and trust him? What happened?
- In verse 3 Jesus says that the man was born blind so that the power of God could be seen through him, so that God could be glorified. Can you think of a way that God could be glorified through the trial you are facing today?
- How do you think the man felt when he realised he was speaking to the messiah?
- Ask someone to read verse 39 out loud. What does this mean? Who are those that think they can see?

INVOLVE

Time to go deeper! The book of John talks a lot about Jesus, the light of the world. Divide up the following short Scripture verses amongst your group and ask everyone to read, pray and share back about what their verse says to them.

John 8:12, John 1:4, John 3:19, John 12:35, John 12:36, John 12:46.

And/Or

Ask each group member to share the name of one person who needs the light of Jesus in their life. As a group, pray for that person together.

APPLY

What is one thing that you will do in response to what you learned this week?



GRATEFUL

CONNECT

- What's one thing the group can pray for for your mum/dad?
- Who's someone you're finding it difficult to get along with at the moment?
- What's something in your life worth celebrating at the moment?
- What's one thing that you have learned as you've read through the book of John over the last few weeks?

DISCUSS

Have someone read John 12:1-8 out loud.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What's the most extravagant thing you've ever tried to do for someone else? What was your motivation for doing it? What ended up happening?
- What's the most expensive gift you've ever given someone? Do you still consider it a good investment?
- What do you think Mary is feeling as she anoints Jesus' feet? What is motivating her?
- Mary gives up something precious and valuable in an act of worship – she chooses that honouring Jesus is more important than her own personal wealth or luxury. What do you think God might be challenging you to give up as an act of worship?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

In addition to the previous questions, you might find the following helpful:

- Mary's act isn't remarkable just because of the expensive perfume – it's worth noting that this story took place in the middle of a crowded room. How do you feel about public, expressive worship? Is it something you find easy or difficult? Why do you think this is?
- Mary's act of worship is met with criticism (parallel stories in Matthew 26 and Mark 14 show that it wasn't just Judas who had negative things to say). Have you ever been guilty of judging or criticising someone else's worship? Why do you think people do this?
- How sacrificial is your attitude to worship at the moment? (We're talking about more than just on Sunday mornings here!) Are you just worshipping God when it's easy and convenient, or are you surrendering and sacrificing in order to go deeper? What is God saying to you about this?
- What stands out to you most from this story? What can you apply to your own life?



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life.

GRATEFUL

INVOLVE

Spend some time in worship as a group. You could choose to sing a few songs if you want. Definitely spend some time praying prayers of adoration – prayers that declare how great God is and prayers that thank him.

If your group is mainly new Christians you might want to structure this time by going around the circle and letting everyone pray once, but if your group is comfortable try letting the worship time proceed with as little structure as possible. Encourage people to be vocal and speak out their prayers rather than just thinking them – even if they're worried about sounding silly.

APPLY

Challenge your group to be sacrificial in their worship – to give up something more than they usually would. (Give more time to prayer or reading their Bible, be more generous with their money, donate some of their stuff to the local Salvos Store or give it away to someone in the church... let your group decide for themselves!)