

ENCOUNTER: WEEK 4

WE WOULD SEE JESUS!

26 September 2010

That's an **ENCOUNTER** we all would like to have, isn't it. To see Jesus.

Many would go out of their way to see somebody famous. We'd ask for an autograph or even request for a photograph with that person!

I'm sure you're also inspired by people that have lived large. Lived their lives with enthusiasm. They have remained relevant and have influenced those around them.

Carl Lewis, the famous American athlete who won 4 gold medals, was inspired by the great **Jesse Owens**. Owens was a Black American athlete that was part of the American team that participated in the Berlin Olympics. [A very diabolical period in world history.] Hitler was establishing Nazi Germany, he was preaching the Aryan race, supremacy gospel. He paraded with pride his athletes and un-ashamedly professed that they would win. Well, history records that Jesse Owens won 3 gold medals broke the record, at that time for the most medals won by one athlete. When Hitler had to shake his hand and hand over the medals he stormed off!

Years later Owens visited the school Lewis attended. As the children lined up to be greeted by Owens, he paused and rubbed the head of the young Lewis. And whispered words of inspiration into his young heart... well needless to say Lewis was greatly inspired by this and went on to emulate and surpass the great Owens.

There is something about being in the presence of greatness. It rubs off.

Jn 12:20- 26

After the festivities died down; after all the fan-fare, the clean-up. The disciples were sitting quietly and pondering the day's happenings, when these Greek guys showed up. They were Greeks. Why is that important? They had been to the feast. They saw what happened. Did they participate or did they just observe? Sometimes we can so close to an **ENCOUNTER**, but we choose to remain Observers. Anyway, they wanted to see Jesus. Greeks were the intellectuals of the day. They had some questions that needed answered, and since they didn't have the opportunity to ask the Disciples or Jesus, whilst the parade was on, they sought an audience on the side. Good tactic. You can come and ask behind the scenes. When you really want to pursue God, you will do whatever it takes to meet HIM!

They needed an audience with this important man. He could answer their questions.

They never got to ask anything! Because He seized the opportunity to teach on a very important aspect of our walk with Him. Will you seize the moment now!

1. V 24: you want to see Me? Understand the parable. **Seed must fall and die.** Seeing me is great. Understanding how I operate, is another thing. Seed must die, otherwise it just lies alone. It's great to have a developed curiosity. It's great to know many people and be known by many. To have some clout and influence. You want to add Me to your list, so that you can Name drop? Perhaps.

I'm all about producing more seed. Die so that you may live. **1 Cor 15:36 "Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies."** Die to self. Jesus proved this. He died on the Cross, laid down His life. Willing to let go, so that others may live.

Many of our problems are so big, in our faces because we are so alive to ourselves. We take ourselves too seriously and brush off the real things that we ought to take seriously. Die to self. Bury pride...

2. V 25: **are you willing to let go?** He says to them and us. Mt 10:37-39. You want to know more about Me? Let go of the things that you love the most.

What is it that you love most? Job, pride, false humility, money, family, status, and friends... let them go and follow Me, He says. You want to know Me, ENCOUNTER Me? That's great, but you will have to let go.

Mk 8:34-36. Leave all, deny yourself. Follow Me. How are we then to Encounter God? Surrender all to Him.

We read the story of the Rich young Ruler in Lk 18:18-23. It was too hard for him to let go of everything that made him who he was. Does this mean that rich people are not spiritual and poor people are? NO! There are many poor people that are spiritual and many poor people that are unspiritual. Just the same there are many rich folks that are very spiritual and many that are very ungodly. It's not about the stuff or the money. It's about the heart that is attached to the money and the stuff.

3. V 26: you want to ENCOUNTER Me? **Serve Me. Follow Me...** You want to know Me, learn how to serve My purposes. Place yourself under My authority and serve Me. Make Me your new Master. Every true servant will be honoured by the Father. That implies that there are true and false servants.

When we have died to self, when we have ENCOUNTERED Jesus, we will do as He did. And everybody agrees. And looks at the other person and says, I told you, you have to be like this or that...

Seriously, how did Jesus live His life?

- 1. He had compassion:** the word means to be helpful and merciful. So on who did Jesus have mercy and perform acts of help? Mt 9: 35-38. V 36... He was moved with compassion by those who were 'weary and scattered'. Why was He moved to this extent? Heb 5:2

Weary and scattered... these people were harassed. They had no Protector. Physically, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually- harassed. They were like sheep without a Shepherd. That is a very unpleasant and dangerous position to be in. The sheep had no protection. There was no recourse to the law for help and protection. Anybody can do as they please to these people and they could do nothing. They were very vulnerable. Jesus cared and cares for those who are in similar situation. Harassed, vulnerable.

They had no provision. No provider. The task of the shepherd is to lead those who are vulnerable and harassed to find grazing and water. Because they'll get hungry and thirsty and the shepherd will lead them to find good food.

The sheep doesn't tell the shepherd where the food is. He tells/ shows them where the pasture is. He had compassion on those who were weary and scattered.

Jesus compassion manifested itself differently in Mt 21:12. When He cleansed the temple. This lot were not vulnerable, weary or harassed. They were so used to the temple protocol, they knew the loop-holes and exploited the poor. They were the harassers; they caused others to become weary and tired. It was this lot that was invited to the banquet, but they were too busy doing the harassment. He cast them out. The temple was cleansed.

Part of our ENCOUNTER, seeing Jesus is to be sensitive, firstly to Him then to the needs of those He cared for.

When we ENCOUNTER Jesus, our lives will never be the same. By its very nature an ENCOUNTER changes those who experience it.

PRAYER:

Father help us today to experience you in a new, fresh way. We need you. We are so dependent on you, even though sometimes it appears as if we can do it on our own.

It is You that breaks the heavy yoke that binds us and keeps us in bondage.