

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 2:1-12

Introduction:

- A. Jesus Christ is the man; but just man. He is God living in a human body; a body that was born of a woman; a body that grew from infancy to adulthood just like every other man.**
- B. Jesus was tempted in all parts just like all other men; but He never at any time submitted to temptation. He never sinned. He lived a perfect life; fulfilled the law of God to the last jot and tittle.**
- C. Jesus Christ then willingly lay down His sinless, perfect body upon the old rugged cross and permitted sinful man to nail Him to that cross.**
- D. There, upon that awful cross He suffered and bled and died forsaken of the heavenly Father. He died as a lost person cut off from God.**
- E. Jesus was buried in a borrowed tomb by two men with whom He had had a close encounter – Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night.**
- F. Jesus rose from the dead and now presents Himself to the whole world as the way the truth and the life to an eternity of happiness and joy with God the Father.**
- G. Our subject speaks of a close encounter with this Man Jesus Christ. Encounter means a direct meeting; an intimate, personal meeting.**
- H. Let us visit the lives of some Bible characters who had close encounters with Jesus Christ.**

I. THE SHEPHERDS WERE THE FIRST TO HAVE A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. Luke tells us that they went away telling all that was told them concerning the child. They returned to their place glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen.

II. THE WISE MEN WHO CAME FROM AFAR HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. They went back ANOTHER WAY.

III. THE WOMAN AT THE WELL HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. She left her water pot and went into the city and said unto the men – “Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did.” Many were saved because of the sayings of this woman.

IV. THE LITTLE MAN, ZACCHAEUS, HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS. He confessed his sin; promised restitution to all he had misused; promised benevolent help to the poor and took Jesus home to dinner.

V. PETER AND ANDREW, JAMES AND JOHN, AND MATTHEW ARE NAMED AS HAVING A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. These all left their chosen fields of work and became life long disciples of Jesus Christ.

VI. THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIRST CHURCH HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold. And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.*

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH Jesus Christ caused This people to understand that they belonged to God as His bought and paid for servants and that all they had belonged to God. God possesses all and He permits each of His children to have charge over that which belong to God to be used within God's will.

The Lord did not command the people of the first church to do what they did, nor did He require it. It was not a good practice – then nor now. It was man's first venture into socialism; it proved to be wrong;

BUT it did show that those people did believe what Paul later taught in 1 Corinthians – *What? Know ye not that your is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are Gods.*

VII. A MAN , A PERSECUTER OF THE LORD’S CHURCH PEOPLE, A MAN NAMMED SAUL HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST and it changed his life for ever. He, trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? He spent the rest of his life doing to the best of his ability JUST WHAT JESUS ASKED HIM TO DO.

VIII. THEN THERE IS YOUR PASTOR, RAY BROOKS. I had a close encounter with Jesus Christ and it changed my life forever. I am not what I was; I am not what I planned for my life. I understand that I and all I posses belong to Jesus Christ and I am extremely happy trying to do what His will is in my entire life. I really went back another way.

IX. THEN THERE WAS THE RICH YOUNG RULLER WHO HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHRIST. He asked Jesus what he had to do to inherit. Jesus spoke words that would help him understand his need for salvation. He went away sorrowful because he just could not bring himself to follow what Jesus told him.

X. THEN THERE WERE TWO MEN WHO HAD A CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS. They were nailed to crosses on either side of the cross Jesus died on. *And one of them railed on Jesus, saying, If you are really Christ save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, To day you shall be with me in paradise.*

These both had a close encounter with Jesus; one went to paradise with Jesus, the other went to hell.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Have you, each of you, ever had a close encounter with Jesus Christ? Did it cause you to go back another way? Or did you just leave in the same way you were when you met Him?**
- B. I have tried to bring each of us into a close encounter with Jesus Christ in this service. Have you felt His nearness?**
- C. Has it caused you to ask, “Lord, what will you have me to do?”**